MEMOIRS

OF THE

COURTS

OF

BERLIN, DRESDEN, WARSAW, AND VIENNA,

IN THE YEARS 1777, 1778, AND 1779.

By N. WILLIAM WRAXALL, Esq.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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PREFACE.

THESE MEMOIRS were originally collected, with a view to publication; but, a reluctance to disclose anecdotes and facts relative to so many distinguished living characters, induced me to postpone the accomplishment of my intention, to a distant period. The lapse of more than twenty years has fully emancipated me from those restraints; the deceafe of the King of Poland, and of the Archducheſs Chriſtina, both which took place during the course of laſt year, having withdrawn the only remaining

impediments to their appearance. The depoſition, added to the misfortunes, of Staniſlaus, rendered him peculiarly ſacred; and had he been ſtill alive, I ſhould yet have delayed publiſhing theſe Memoirs.

However remote the time may appear ſince they were written, I have ſtill choſen to be wholly ſilent on many points equally curious and intereſting. The perſonages themſelves, to whom that remark applies, are either dead or forgotten; and motives of reſpect induce me to let them remain in oblivion.

In unveiling the errors, or diſcloſing the foibles, of Princes and of Miniſters, we muſt conſider them as incident to the frailties and infirmities, inſeparable from human nature. But, their greateſt faults will be

 obliterated,

obliterated, when compared with the atrocities, and contrafted with the exceffes, of the prefent felf-created Sovereigns of France.

How moderate will appear the ambition of Jofeph the Second, in the affair of the Bavarian fucceffion; and how mild muft be accounted the moft defpotic acts of Frederic, towards the Saxons, or the Poles; on a comparifon with the flagitious enormities now committed, under the banner of Liberty and Equality, in Switzerland, in Rome, and in Piedmont! Even in their moft arbitrary proceedings, Jofeph and Frederic refpecting the rights of human nature, of religion, and of nations. In the conduct of the "Directory," we experience their emancipation from all reftraints of private honor, of public faith, and of moral obligation. They have made

the beſt apology for deſpotiſm, as well as for ſuperſtition; and have compelled us to look back with envy or regret, to ages of the earth, which the philoſophy of the preſent time has endeavoured to repreſent, as only deſerving of oblivion, or worthy of compaſſion.

CHESTERFIELD-STREET,
BERKELEY-SQUARE,
April 2, 1799.

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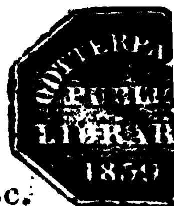
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MEMOIRS, &c.

LETTER I.

Anecdotes of Frederic the Second, Landgrave of Hesse.—Hanover.—Electress Sophia.—Sophia Dorothea, Princess of Zell, wife to George the First.—Relation of the principal circumstances attending her imprisonment, and the death of Count Konigsmark.—Examination of that transaction.—Particulars of the last illness and death of King George the First.

HANOVER, *Sept.* 9, 1777.

THE line of inquiry and research which you so warmly recommended to me at my leaving England, is undoubtedly far more interesting, as well as important, than the description of palaces and cities. But, it is likewise more difficult, and in some respects I might add, more invidious. Kings and ministers are neither as accessible as the buildings they inhabit,

nor can we venture to ſpeak of them while alive with the ſame freedom. "Periculoſæ plenum opus Aleæ, hiſtoriam ſui "temporis ſcribere." Even Burnet and Clarendon, who wrote of the events of their own times, did not eſcape the penalty inſeparable from ſuch an attempt. I am however, on the other hand, ſenſible, that it is only from contemporary authority we can derive the moſt authentic, as well as the moſt curious materials of hiſtory. The minute and perſonal anecdotes of illuſtrious men ſoon fade under the touch of time, and are obliterated. In order to be preſerved and tranſmitted to poſterity, they muſt be collected at the moment. The letters which I propoſe to addreſs to you, from the various courts which I may chance to viſit while on the continent, will therefore be directed, though not excluſively, yet in a peculiar manner, to that object. If ſometimes, when ſurveying ſcenes or countries remote from the common track I may ſeem to deviate from my

original deſign, the digreſſion will only be ſhort.

I ſhall paſs over the time that elapſed between my landing at Calais early in July, and my arrival at this place, as furniſhing little towards my preſent deſign; and I ſhall therefore neither detain you at Antwerp, at the Hague, nor on the Rhine. Remounting that River from Duſſeldorf to Mentz, I croſſed the dominions of Heſſe, to Caſſel. The Landgrave may be accounted one of the richeſt, as well as moſt powerful Princes of the German Empire, after the temporal Electors: the Dukes of Wirtemberg and of Mecklenburg Schwerin alone, among the Princes of the ſecond order, can conteſt with him in extent of territory, in revenues, and in political importance.

Frederic the Second, reigning Landgrave of Heſſe Caſſel, is at this time about fifty-ſeven years of age, of a middle ſize inclining to robuſt, and of a manly figure. Over his uniform he uſually wears the

Order of the Garter; but, his treatment of the Landgravine his firſt wife, who was a daughter of George the Second, did not tend to cement the alliance which he had formed with the King of Great Britain. They were ſeparated from each other during many years. The infelicity of his firſt nuptials has not however prevented him from contracting a ſecond marriage, as ſoon as the neceſſary forms of decorum permitted. Captivated by the attractions of the Princeſs of Brandenburgh Schwedt, he eſpouſed her about four years ago. She is a collateral deſcendant of the Pruſſian Houſe, and is ſtill at this time a very beautiful woman. But, the Landgrave ſeems either not deſtined, or not calculated, for matrimonial happineſs. They live in a ſtate of alienation and eſtrangement, in the ſame palace and capital, without iſſue, or almoſt intercourſe of any kind.

For this domeſtic misfortune, he conſoles himſelf in the ſociety of Mademoiſelle F——, whoſe perſonal charms are heightened

by

by all the fascinating coquetry of a Parisian education. She was mistress to the Duke de Bouillon, and arrived here only three months since. Two thousand Louis-d'ors were allowed her for the expences of her journey from Paris to Cassel; and her actual establishment falls little short of six thousand pounds a-year. As if all these remunerations were below her merit, she is treated with still more flattering marks of distinction. At the public theatre her box is placed close to the stage, in a conspicuous part of the house. I saw her there last night, when the Landgrave and Landgravine were present at the performance. This contempt of decency, so repugnant to our manners, is not uncommon in the German Courts, and derives a sort of sanction from custom.

Cassel is in many respects a beautiful city, and embellished with some magnificent buildings. Hanover, on the contrary, presents the image of departed greatness; palaces without inhabitants, a capital with-

out trade, and an Electorate without a Sovereign. It is principally by the recollection of what it was, that Hanover continues to interest an ordinary traveller. To an Englishman it offers many curious subjects of reflection connected with history. I study the local scenery with pleasure; nor have I been less attentive to collect some of the anecdotes which tradition still preserves relative to the Electoral Family. At the palace of Herenhausen, yesterday, a grey-headed domestic of fourscore, pointed out to me the precise spot in the gardens, where the old Electress Sophia, wife of Ernest Augustus, dropped down and expired. That event happened in the beginning of June 1714, not eight weeks before the death of Queen Anne. "I perfectly remember," said he to me, "the evening, which was "uncommonly serene and fine. The Elect-"ress appeared to be in perfect health, not-"withstanding her advanced period of life. "She had dined in public; and, invited by "the beauty of the weather, walked out, "accom-

"accompanied by the ladies and principal "persons composing her court. Suddenly, "without any apparent cause or attack, "she exclaimed, 'It rains! it rains!' "and running across the garden, she soon "sunk down, close to a little alcove about "two hundred yards from the palace, "where in the space of a few minutes she "breathed her last, without pang or ef-"fort."

The destiny of this Princess was very singular. Youngest daughter of the exiled and unfortunate Frederic the Fifth, Elector Palatine, King of Bohemia; brought up in adversity and privations; married to a Prince of the family of Brunswick, who had then no prospect of becoming the head of his House; destined in the evening of life, by a wonderful concurrence of circumstances, to the English succession, from which she was apparently removed by her birth to an almost incalculable distance; surviving that event above thirteen years; and at last carried off by death at the very moment when

ſhe muſt have aſcended the Britiſh throne: ſuch were the outlines of her hiſtory. We know, that though above eighty years old at the time of her deceaſe, ſhe felt few of the infirmities of age; and that far from regarding with indifference the crown which awaited her, ſhe anticipated with anxiety and impatience, the accompliſhment of ſo great an expectation. It would have been a ſingular ſpectacle to have beheld the granddaughter of James the Firſt quitting Hanover at more than fourſcore years of age, embarking for her new dominions, and aſſuming the reins of government, at a time when other princes are uſually incapacitated for all the functions of royalty.

My reſearches have, however, been more particularly directed to another Princeſs of the Electoral Family, leſs generally known than the Electreſs Sophia: I mean, the wife of George the Firſt; for ſhe was never acknowledged as Queen of England, or even as Electreſs of Hanover. She is in fact chiefly remembered by ſome imperfect tradi-

 tions

tions of her gallantry and her misfortunes. The greater part of her life was paſſed in a ſort of melancholy ſequeſtration, at the Caſtle of Ahlden, in the Duchy of Zell. As only perſons of inferior condition were admitted to ſee her, during the reſidence which ſhe made there, it is very difficult to aſcertain with certainty the principal circumſtances of her hiſtory. Even relative to the charge of infidelity brought againſt her, it is not eaſy to ſupport by facts any decided opinion. Her innocence is matter of inference and belief, more than of poſitive proof. I have converſed with many perſons who recollect her death, though ſcarcely with any who ever ſaw her. On the nature of her connection with Count Konigſmark, and on the particulars of his *diſappearance*, I have in a peculiar manner endeavoured to obtain accurate information. But, over this tranſaction ſo myſterious a veil has been drawn that no contemporary teſtimony or evidence, on which implicit reliance can be placed, is now to be procured.

cured. The Court of Hanover, as might naturally be expected, was desirous to suppress as much as possible, every circumstance relative to the Princess and her pretended lover. Even the name of Konigsmark was not mentioned here without repugnance, till within the last twenty years.

Various portraits of Sophia Dorothea, the wife of George the First, still exist in the palace here at Hanover, as well as in that of Herenhausen. I have considered them with attention: and if I were compelled to name any person now living, to whom they bear a particular resemblance, I should say it was to the celebrated Mrs. Draper, better known under the name of Sterne's "Eliza;" but, the Princess was unquestionably by far the most beautiful of the two women. In a very capital picture of her, which struck me yesterday at Herenhausen, she appears to be in the bloom of youth. The contour of her face is more round than oval, the features regular, and their expression gay, pleasing, and animated. Her

eyes

eyes are hazel, and her brown hair plays negligently over her forehead. The painter has dreſſed her in a lilac-coloured veſt richly embroidered, which is cloſely fitted to her body, and calculated to diſplay the delicacy of her ſhape. Over her left ſhoulder is buckled a blue mantle, adorned with flower-de-luces; and behind her ſtands a negro girl, who holds out to her a ſcarlet riband. This portrait was probably done ſoon after her marriage in 1682, when ſhe was about ſeventeen, and cannot be conſidered without emotions of concern for her ſubſequent fate. I ſhall endeavour to throw together the moſt material facts relative to her, which I have collected at various times, here, as well as in other parts of the empire. They will ſerve at leaſt to give ſome general information on which to form an opinion reſpecting that unfortunate Princeſs.

Her father, George William, Duke of Brunſwick Lunenburgh and Zell, was an elder brother of Erneſt Auguſtus, Duke of Hanover

Hanover, who married Sophia, youngest daughter of the King and Queen of Bohemia. George William was one of the most distinguished Princes of his time, and not less known by his talents for war, than by his political abilities in peace. He checked the career of Louis the Fourteenth's arms, at a moment when they were every where victorious, by defeating Marshal Crequi at Consarbruck, in 1675, and by taking him prisoner afterwards in the city of Treves. In the decline of life, his profound judgment, added to his zealous protection of the Protestant Religion, rendered him the oracle of all the adherents to that faith, and the declared enemy of France. It was to the Duke of Zell, that William, Prince of Orange, usually had recourse for advice, in great or delicate emergencies; and before he ventured to embark for England in 1688, on the expedition against James the Second, he consulted George William in person. A range of rooms in the Castle of Zell, is still called the Prince of Orange's apartments, from having been frequently inhabited

inhabited by him, and appropriated to his ufe. Even in the act of fucceffion, which called the Houfe of Hanover to the Britifh throne, William was unqueftionably actuated in part by friendfhip for the Duke of Zell; whofe defcendants, immediate and collateral, were thereby eventually raifed from German Princes of the fecond order, to the rank of Kings.

George William, after having paffed the meridian of life in celibacy, became at the age of forty deeply enamoured with Eleanor Defmier, a young lady whom he faw by accident at Breda in Holland. Her father, Alexander Defmier, was a French gentleman, of ancient and honourable defcent, Lord of Olbreufe in the province of Poitou. Being a Hugonot, he had quitted his native country on account of the perfecution to which he was liable for his religious opinions. If we may believe tradition, Mademoifelle d'Olbreufe was not fo dazzled with the conqueft which her charms had effected, as to forget the dif-

proportion

proportion of rank and birth between her and her lover. She did not yield to his addresses, till convinced by time of the sincerity, as well as the warmth of his affection. In the marriage contract, she was qualified "Countess of Harburg;" it not being in the Duke of Zell's power, according to the forms of the German jurisprudence, to elevate her to the dignity of a Princess of the Empire, though he could make her his legitimate wife. But, at his solicitation some years afterwards, the Emperor Leopold raised her to that eminence; and she was then universally recognized as Duchess of Brunswick-Zell.

Sophia Dorothea, the only issue of George William by Mademoiselle d'Olbreuse, was born in 1666, and at an early age was promised in marriage to Augustus Frederic, son of Anthony Ulric, Duke of Brunswick Wolfenbuttel. But, this young Prince, who excited great expectations, was cut off when only nineteen, having died in consequence of the wounds which he received

received at the siege of Philipsburg in 1676. Ernest Augustus, Duke of Hanover, who was presumptive heir to his brother George William in the Duchy of Zell, as being a masculine fief, was likewise naturally desirous of securing the allodial or personal inheritance of the elder branch of his family. He demanded therefore, the Princess Sophia Dorothea in marriage for his eldest son George Louis, Hereditary Prince of Hanover. The Duke of Zell consented to the proposal; but, it is universally asserted that neither the Duchess his wife, nor the young Princess herself, submitted to it without great reluctance and considerable opposition. The nuptials were nevertheless solemnized in November 1682. In the following year she brought into the world a son, who was afterwards King George the Second. His birth was followed by a daughter, who by her marriage with Frederick William the First, became Queen of Prussia.

But, the union of the Princess of Zell with the Hereditary Prince of Hanover, though

though productive of iſſue, was by no means happy. It is difficult to aſcertain whether their infelicity reſulted from natural incompatibility of character; whether it was principally produced by neglect on *his* part; or whether it aroſe from *her* heart being preoccupied by a paſſion for another perſon. The Court of Hanover was at that period one of the moſt ſplendid, gallant, and poliſhed, of any in the German Empire, or in the North of Europe. Erneſt Auguſtus himſelf avowedly maintained a commerce of gallantry with the Counteſs of Platen; a woman of beauty and accompliſhments, whoſe influence over him was in many reſpects almoſt without bounds. His ſon, the Hereditary Prince, imitated the example ſet him; though he preſerved for his wife, and manifeſted towards her, ſentiments of perſonal reſpect and conſideration. She ſeems on her part to have been a high-ſpirited woman, of ſtrong paſſions, capable of the moſt violent reſolutions; and not ſufficiently circumſpect in her conduct, whatever might be the purity of her intentions,

intentions, in a ſituation where calumny might ſo eaſily find ſubject for attack.

Among the ſtrangers of diſtinction who viſited the Court of Hanover, was Count Konigſmark, a man whoſe crimes, adventures, and tragical end, have rendered him too much known. He was by birth a Saxon, though his family was originally from Sweden. Handſome in his perſon, captivating in his manners and addreſs, he was formed to ſucceed with women. He had been early known by, and peculiarly acceptable to, the Princeſs of Hanover, before her marriage, when ſhe reſided at Zell in her father's palace. It is even pretended, that ſhe had retained a deep impreſſion of this partiality for the Count, which naturally revived on ſeeing him again. Konigſmark, whatever perſonal or external graces he poſſeſſed, was unqueſtionably a diſſolute, unprincipled, enterprizing man of pleaſure, capable of the greateſt crimes in the purſuit or attainment of his views. He had travelled over Europe,

had feen fervice in various countries, and diftinguifhed himfelf by his gallantry, magnificence, and courage. In Spain, where he had difplayed his addrefs on public occafions, he was honoured by, as public teftimonies of attachment, on the part of the ladies of the Court of Madrid. When in England, under the reign of Charles the Second, he narrowly efcaped an ignominious execution, for the murder of Mr. Thynne, in 1682. His accomplices, for it is impoffible to doubt that he employed or fuborned them, though the fact could not be judicially brought home to him; were all executed at Tyburn, for that atrocious act. He himfelf was referved for a deftiny hardly lefs unfortunate, a few years later; and his name is now infeparably connected with the Princefs of Hanover, Sophia Dorothea.

" The Prince her hufband, who ferved during more than one campaign, in the Imperial army againft the Turks, was frequently abfent from her; a circumftance

which naturally facilitated Konigſmark's acceſs to the Princeſs. It is unqueſtionable that ſhe entertained for him ſentiments of the moſt partial nature, and that ſhe indulged them in a manner, which, if not criminal, was at leaſt imprudent. She was accuſtomed, two or three times in a week, to feign an indiſpoſition, under which pretence ſhe retired to her apartment. Konigſmark was then admitted; they ſupped together, and uſually remained at table, or in converſation, till two or three o'clock in the morning. When he retired, he deſcended by a little private ſtaircaſe, near the great gate of the Ducal Palace, which conducted him into the town.

Interviews of ſuch a nature, at ſuch hours, and in the Princeſs's own apartments, imply great, and one may add, improper intimacy; particularly, if Konigſmark's profligate character be recollected. It is even difficult at firſt ſight, not to connect with them the idea of a criminal connection. But, on the other hand, there

is neither any proof that they were ſo in effect, nor was any ſuch proof ever attempted to be made out againſt her, though her enemies were deeply intereſted to eſtabliſh the fact, if it had been poſſible. In addition to this negative preſumption in her favour, it is poſitively aſſerted that, during the time when Konigſmark was with her, they never remained alone together; one or more of her ladies of honour, and thoſe of the moſt unimpeached characters, being always preſent. The very imprudence of admitting him to ſuch interviews, ſeems to prove that they were innocent, ſince it was impoſſible that they could be altogether concealed or unknown.

Unfortunately, Konigſmark's perſon and accompliſhments had made an impreſſion not only on the Princeſs, but on Madame de Platen, miſtreſs of Erneſt Auguſtus. Whether, as is pretended, he had divulged the favours which ſhe conferred on him; or whether he had returned her partiality with indifference and contempt, as other

persons assure, it is certain that she deeply resented his behaviour. Irritated at his preference for the Princess Sophia Dorothea, of which she was well apprized, and having set spies to watch his motions, she soon discovered his secret interviews with her rival, of which she gave information to the Duke of Hanover. It was natural to suppose that he would not tolerate them; and the Count soon afterwards received an indirect, but peremptory intimation, that his longer stay at Hanover would be displeasing. As he delayed compliance with the injunction on various pretences, it was reiterated. He therefore made public preparations for his departure, fixed the day and hour, ordered his post-horses, and having commanded his servants to expect him at three o'clock in the morning, he went privately to the Ducal Palace. The Princess, under pretence of indisposition, admitted him as before to her apartment, where a supper was served, and they re-

mained for ſome hours together; always however in company with one or more of her ladies.

No ſooner was the Counteſs of Platen apprized that Konigſmark was in the Princeſs's chamber, than ſhe inſtantly carried the intelligence to the Duke, and repreſented to him the inſolence of a man thus braving, if not diſhonouring him in his own palace. Profiting of his indignation, ſhe induced him to give directions for puniſhing the Count's temerity, by an act of immediate violence. It is doubtleſs to be lamented, that Erneſt Auguſtus ſhould have ſanctioned or authoriſed an aſſaſſination; for ſuch it muſt be deemed: but, it ſhould likewiſe be remembered that he was a Sovereign Prince, and the provocation was great, if he really believed Konigſmark's viſits to his daughter-in-law to have been of a criminal nature. No appeal could be made to his ſon, who was abſent in Hungary, and the Count was on the point

point of leaving Hanover. How far these considerations may seem to palliate the act, I leave mankind to determine.

A very general idea prevails throughout Germany, and has been circulated in various publications, that Ernest Augustus having caused four of his guards to put on masks, they by his order attacked Konigsmark, as he came out of the Princess's apartment, and killed him on the spot. I saw this very morning, the place in the Electoral Palace, where tradition says the Count fell. It is a passage almost destitute of light, not above nine or ten paces in length. A door at one extremity opens into a large handsome apartment, the first of the range formerly occupied by the Princess of Hanover, and out of which Konigsmark passed, when he quitted her on the night that he perished. At the other end is a second door, near the staircase, by which he was to have left the Palace. That this was the scene of his seizure, there is no doubt; but the means used to put him out of life were more

 secret,

ſecret, though not leſs effectual, than open attack. I ſhall relate them from good authority.

Orders were iſſued on the part of the Duke of Hanover, to the ſoldier who mounted guard at the Palace gate, to ſtop Kônigſmark, as he deſcended the private ſtaircaſe beforementioned; to force him to follow by menaces of immediate death; and then to ſhut him into a ſubterranean vault or cellar, which was expreſsly indicated. The ſoldier punctually executed the commiſſion, but without knowing or ſuſpecting the conſequence. It is aſſerted that the Count neither made, nor even attempted reſiſtance; a fact which would ſeem to prove either a defect of courage, or a want of any means of defence; unleſs we ſuppoſe that, confiding in his innocence, he took no precaution for his ſecurity, and was unſuſpicious of an intention to interrupt his paſſage out of the Palace. The vault into which the unfortunate Konigſmark was thus forced, could at pleaſure be filled with water, by means of a pipe. It was in fact a reſervoir; and

and no ſooner was he ſhut up in it, than they immediately admitted the water, and drowned him. His body on the enſuing morning was put into a heated oven, and the mouth of it bricked up, as the moſt effectual means of for ever concealing the whole tranſaction.

But, though, the preciſe nature of the means uſed to effect Konigſmark's death might not be immediately divulged; his ſudden diſappearance, and the anxious inquiries of his ſervants, who after vainly ſeeking him through the city of Hanover, repaired to the Ducal Palace, in order to obtain intelligence of his fate, ſoon betrayed the ſecret. It was ſpeedily conveyed to the Princeſs, who well-knowing the implacable enmity which Madame de Platen bore him, made no doubt that the Count had fallen a victim to her vengeance. But far from ſubmitting tamely to the power of Erneſt Auguſtus, or even conſulting her own perſonal intereſts, ſhe abandoned herſelf to the moſt immoderate tranſports of reſentment and indignation. Neither the autho-

rity,

rity, the presence, nor the menaces of the Elector, could subdue her unconquerable spirit. She treated him as a monster and an assassin, declared that she would no longer remain among barbarians and murderers, and even appeared ready to make some attempt on her own life, in the violence of her despair. After so public and so scandalous a scene, it became impossible either to conceal, or to pass over the transaction in silence. Ernest Augustus ordered the Princess therefore, to be conducted to the Palace or Castle of Ahlden, some leagues distant from Hanover, where she was ever after retained in a sort of honorary confinement. Two ladies and a chamberlain were named to attend on her, and to compose her household. This extraordinary event took place in 1686, at a time when Konigsmark was about thirty-one years old, and when Sophia Dorothea could not have accomplished her twenty-first year.

How far the Duke of Zell her father approved or condemned the conduct of Ernest Augustus his brother, does not appear; nor, if

if it were known, could we form any ground on which to infer with certainty his daughter's innocence or criminality. That her husband, the Prince of Hanover, was in no manner acquainted with, or privy to the death of Konigsmark, is clear to demonstration; since it was a sudden act of resentment, committed during the time that he was absent in Hungary. He even submitted, it is certain, with considerable reluctance to the Duke his father's desire, that he should for ever renounce the Princess; Ernest Augustus exacted of him that mark of filial obedience, if not of approbation. In December 1694, a sentence of *separation* was pronounced between the Prince and Princess. But no *divorce*, in the most extensive sense of the term, as totally dissolving the marriage between them, and enabling each party to marry again, ever took place. Sophia Dorothea continued to reside at Ahlden, till the death of her father-in-law, the Duke of Hanover, which happened in 1698; and from the time of her being first transferred thither, to the end of her life, she

was commonly known under the name of "Princeſs of Ahlden."

After the deceaſe of Erneſt Auguſtus, George, then become Elector of Hanover, made propoſitions to the Princeſs, for an oblivion of paſt animoſities, and for a reconciliation. It is difficult to ſay whether a conviction of her innocence, a ſentiment of affection, or motives of intereſt and policy, were moſt prevalent in this propoſal. But, it is certain that ſhe rejected the offers, and replied, that "nothing could induce her to live in a family of aſſaſſins." A fact much more incredible, but which reſts upon the ſtrongeſt evidence, is that after the death of Queen Anne, when the Elector was called to the throne of Great Britain, he renewed his propoſals to her for the ſame purpoſe. A deputation, compoſed of Engliſh Peers and Gentlemen, by the new King's deſire, waited on Sophia Dorothea at Ahlden, and acquainted her that they wiſhed to be permitted to approach her as their Queen. They repreſented to her the injurious

injurious consequences which her separation, and her state of misintelligence with the King her husband might produce, peculiarly to her son. And they reminded her that for slighter causes, the birth of James the Second's son had been called in question. Far from yielding to these arguments, or being dazzled by the prospect of a crown, she peremptorily rejected the overture: "If," said she, "I am guilty "of the crime imputed to me, I am unworthy to be your Queen. If I am "innocent, the King is unworthy to be "my husband." A woman capable of such a renunciation, must either have been animated with implacable resentment for the assassination of Konigsmark, or must have been conscious of her own innocence, and of the malignity of her persecutors. Of the fact itself I have seen and heard such proofs, as it seems impossible to call in doubt.

Sophia Dorothea, during her confinement at Ahlden, was treated with every mark

mark of reſpect due to her rank. The two ladies of her houſehold, the chamberlain, and the officer who commanded the guard, conſtantly dined at her table. She was allowed to go in her coach, to the diſtance of a league from the Caſtle. Perſons of inferior condition, workmen, and tradeſmen, had free acceſs; but no man or woman of conſideration was allowed to approach or ſpeak to her. After Erneſt Auguſtus's death, who was her declared enemy, ſhe might have obtained, if not her liberty, at leaſt an alleviation of the reſtraint and privations impoſed on her. But ſhe diſdained to make any application for the purpoſe. By the concurring teſtimony of all perſons, ſhe bore her misfortunes with dignity and equanimity; never vented herſelf in reproaches againſt thoſe who had injured or oppreſſed her; and preſerved the cheerfulneſs of a mind ſerene and innocent, in the midſt of her hard condition. Even her beauty remained in a great degree unimpaired, to a late period of her life.

Blondel,

Blondel, who was the French Miniſter at the Court of Hanover, from 1715 to 1726, a period when ſhe was ſtill living, and who had every opportunity of informing himſelf of the particulars of her hiſtory, confirms all the principal facts which I have enumerated reſpecting her. In a very curious account which he drew up of the whole tranſaction, he declares that he derived his information relative to Sophia Dorothea, from the mouth of the ſecond Counteſs of Platen, miſtreſs to George the Firſt. Blondel proteſts likewiſe, that he had himſelf ſeen the very ſoldier of Erneſt Auguſtus's guards, who ſhut Konigſmark into the reſervoir; and who aſſured Blondel, that he ſhould never forgive himſelf for having had any ſhare in ſo abominable an act. "Such," adds he, "was the "uniform gaiety and ſerenity of the Princeſs's "temper during her reſidence at Ahlden, "as to impreſs univerſally with a conviction of her poſſeſſing a quiet conſcience. "Thoſe who ſaw her, if they judged from "appearances, would even have ſuppoſed

"that

"that ſhe was not diſcontented with her "ſituation and fortune."

In 1705, her father George William Duke of Zell died, at above eighty years of age, and ſhe then ſucceeded to all the *perſonal property*, which was very ample. It was commonly aſſerted and believed, that ſhe contrived to remit large ſums annually, ariſing from her ſeparate income, to her ſon, George the Electoral Prince. When he afterwards became, by his father's elevation to the Britiſh Throne, Prince of Wales, Sophia Dorothea continued to ſupply him liberally with money from her own purſe. She maintained with him a regular intercourſe by letters, and expreſſed towards him the warmeſt ſentiments of affection. It is probable that ſuch proofs of it, however natural and meritorious, did not tend to heal the breach between her and her huſband. She remained till the period of her death, confined at Ahlden; nor did George the Firſt, who ſurvived her about eight months, wear mourning for her as his wife, but as his couſin; though

though he permitted his ſon and the other branches of the Royal Family, to mourn as for their mother and grandmother.

When we conſider the principal circumſtances of the princeſs Sophia Dorothea's hiſtory, we can ſcarcely form other than one opinion reſpecting her. She was doubtleſs highly imprudent, and therefore in ſome meaſure culpable; but it ſeems impoſſible not to acquit her of crime. Even if all the facts which I have enumerated, do not impreſs the conviction, there ſtill remain others hardly leſs forcible, drawn either from the internal evidence of the ſtory, or reſting on the ſtrongeſt teſtimony. She herſelf, during the long term of her detention at Ahlden, conſtantly and invariably perſiſted in aſſerting her innocence. As often as ſhe received the ſacrament, which was frequently, ſhe repeated the proteſtation; and ſhe confirmed it when near her end. She is ſaid to have admitted that her heart was not indifferent to Konigſmark, but ſhe maintained that her honour was unſullied.

The lady who was in attendance about her person, on the fatal night when Konigſmark periſhed, and who let him out of the Princeſs's apartment, confirmed the ſame aſſurance. As an accomplice or participatreſs in her miſtreſs's ſuppoſed guilt, this lady was impriſoned by order of Erneſt Auguſtus: but ſhe proteſted that neither at the laſt interview of the Count with Sophia Dorothea, nor at any of their preceding ones, had they ever been left alone for an inſtant together.

It is very commonly aſſerted here at Hanover, that Madam de Platen was purſued by remorſe during her whole life, for having inſtigated Erneſt Auguſtus to take vengeance on Konigſmark: and they add, that during her laſt illneſs ſhe imagined continually that ſhe beheld his ſpectre near her bedſide. But, if George the Firſt had really believed his wife guilty, in the full extent of the term, would he ever have condeſcended ſolemnly to propoſe a reconcilitaion to her? The very circumſtances

of Konigſmark's end, rather mark a ſudden tranſport of indignation, or a ſally of anger, than the ſpirit of ſober puniſhment. It has left a ſtain on the memory of a Prince, otherwiſe highly amiable in his character; and whatever may be ſaid in its extenuation, the act can no more be juſtified, than the murder of Monaldeſchi by Chriſtina, in the gallery at Fontainbleau.

Before I quit the ſubject, let me add a few words relative to the death of George the Firſt himſelf; an event which happened only ſeven or eight months after that of his wife. It is generally aſſerted, and all our hiſtorians inform us, that His Majeſty expired at Oſnabrugh, on his way to Hanover. I have been more than once in the apartment of the Epiſcopal Palace at the former city, where they pretend he breathed his laſt. But the fact was nevertheleſs, I apprehend, otherwiſe. I will relate the particulars of his laſt illneſs, as I received them ſome time ſince, from an ancient domeſtic, who attended him on his journey,

and which I confider as particularly authentic. His own words will convey the moſt accurate idea of the fact: "On the 20th of "June 1727, in the evening," ſaid he, "his "Majeſty arrived at Delden, a little town "near the frontiers of Germany, but belong-"ing to the Republic of Holland. At that "time he appeared to be in perfect health. "He was entertained at the ſeat of a No-"bleman, about twenty miles from thence; "and after ſupper he eat of ſome melons, "which doubtleſs cauſed the indigeſtion "that proved fatal to him. He returned "to Delden the ſame night, where the "Ducheſs of Kendal expected him; for ſhe "accompanied, or rather followed him, as "ſhe travelled with poſt-horſes; while the "King, by means of relays placed on the "road, was enabled to proceed with more "expedition. Having taken ſome hours "repoſe in the inn, he continued his journey "for Hanover very early on the enſuing "morning, the Ducheſs of Kendal remain-"ing behind at Delden. Previous to his

"ſetting

" ſetting out, he drank half a cup of choco-
" late, and ſoon afterwards found himſelf
" indiſpoſed. When he arrived at Bentheim,
" a town about twenty miles from Delden, he
" was already ſeriouſly ill; but his anxiety
" and impatience to puſh forward to Oſna-
" brugh, prevented his having recourſe to
" medical aſſiſtance. An emetic, had it
" been adminiſtered at that time, might, it
" is probable, have ſaved him.

" At Rheine, the next ſtage, which is
" ſituate in the dominions of the Biſhop of
" Munſter, his Majeſty continuing very
" unwell, the perſons who accompanied
" him, entreated him to ſtop and to call in
" help; but as he peremptorily refuſed, they
" proceeded. He grew perceptibly worſe
" every minute, and before he got to Ippen-
" buren, a little town of Weſtphalia belong-
" ing to his Pruſſian Majeſty, the King was
" become lethargic. One of his arms ſunk
" down, and all the endeavours made to
" revive the limb, by chafing and rubbing
" it, proved ineffectual. The moſt ſerious

" alarms began to be entertained by the
" perſons who attended him; but he per-
" ſiſted in his wiſh to proceed without
" delay. At Ippenburen, they held a ſort
" of conſultation on the meaſures proper
" to be adopted; and a meſſenger was
" diſpatched to acquaint the Ducheſs of
" Kendal with his Majeſty's illneſs. He
" met her about two miles beyond Rheine,
" and on receiving this information, ſhe
" made all haſte to come up with the
" King.

" No remonſtrances or expoſtulations
" could prevail on him to ſtop at Ippen-
" buren. He had only eighteen miles
" from thence to his brother's Palace at
" Oſnabrugh, where he knew that every
" accommodation and aid could be pro-
" cured. His tongue began to ſwell,
" his ſenſes to fail, and his articulation
" to become indiſtinct. But, as long
" as he could make himſelf underſtood,
" he continued to repeat, ' Oſnabrugh!
" Oſna-

"Ofnabrugh!' They therefore hurried
"on, in hopes of reaching that city
"while he was ftill alive, though the King
"was fallen totally fenfelefs into the arms
"of one of his attendants, a gentleman
"named Fabrice. The place where he
"expired, is difficult to afcertain; but it is
"believed that he breathed his laft, as the
"carriage mounted the high hill out of
"Ippenburen. The body was, indeed,
"ftill warm when they arrived at Ofna-
"brugh, where his veins were opened, and
"every method was vainly ufed to recover
"him, as he never gave any fign of life
"or perception, after leaving Ippenburen.
"About half-way between that place and
"Rheine, a fecond courier, difpatched from
"Ofnabrugh, announced to the Duchefs
"of Kendal, that George the Firft was no
"more. She received the intelligence with
"demonftrations of violent grief, tearing
"her hair, and exclaiming that fhe was
"undone. When her firft emotions had
"fubfided, fhe difmiffed the ladies who

" accompanied her; and not venturing,
" or not choosing, to proceed to Hanover
" at such a moment, she took the road to
" Brunswick, where she remained for three
" months afterwards."

My next letter will be from Zell.

LETTER II.

Defcription of the Caftle of Ahlden.—Reflections on the death and hiftory of Sophia Dorothea, Princefs of Zell and of Hanover.—Caftle of Zell.—Account of the Danifh Revolution in 1772.—Particulars of the arreft of Caroline Matilda, Queen of Denmark, of Struenfee, and of Brandt.—Removal of the Queen to Zell.—Her laft illnefs and death.—Detail of thofe events.—Reflections on her character and misfortunes.

ZELL, *Sept.* 13, 1777.

PROMPTED by curiofity to fee the Caftle in which Sophia Dorothea, the wife of George the Firft, refided during fo large a portion of her life, I took the road to Ahlden on leaving Hanover. It lies acrofs an unfrequented part of the Electorate, through a dreary tract of country; and the diftance is not lefs than thirty miles. Ahlden has no title to the appellation of a Caftle, except that it is furrounded with a double moat,

moat, acroſs which are thrown drawbridges. The building itſelf is compoſed only of brick and wood, reſembling rather a large farm-houſe than a Ducal ſeat, and deſcribing three ſides of a ſquare in figure. I obſerved on one part, the date 1579; and over the principal entrance are the arms of the Houſe of Brunſwick, with the year 1613 inſcribed beneath. The whole manſion has an air of antiquity ſpread over it, mixed with melancholy ſequeſtration; and the rooms are neither numerous nor elegant, though ſuperior to what the external appearance ſeems to announce. In a large ſquare apartment, which was formerly the eating-room, are preſerved two portraits: one of George the Firſt at full length, in his robes of ſtate; the other of Sophia Dorothea herſelf. This laſt picture is very ill executed; but it reſembles all the other portraits of her which I have ſeen. She is repreſented in a ſort of fancy dreſs embroidered, and her hair ornamented with flowers. The face is charming, and there

is

is in its expreſſion a wildneſs or playful-neſs, which adds to its effect.

Adjoining to the above-mentioned apartment, and on the ſame floor, are three rooms, one within the other. They command a tolerable proſpect to the North, over the meadows in front of the houſe, through which runs the river Aller, at the diſtance of three hundred paces. In the innermoſt chamber, the unfortunate Princeſs of Hanover expired on the 13th of November 1726, at eleven o'clock at night. She was then ſixty years and nine months old, of which ſhe had paſſed near forty at Ahlden. From the Gazette of that year, we are only informed that her preceding indiſpoſition was ſhort. Many of the villagers remember her; and they confirm the fact of George the Electoral Prince her ſon, (afterwards King George the Second), having attempted in vain to obtain acceſs to her. Anxious to ſee his mother, he ſwam his horſe acroſs the river Aller, and unaccompanied by any perſon, reached the Caſtle.

He

He even paſſed the outward moat, but was ſtopped at the drawbridge of the inward moat, by the Baron de Bulau, under whoſe care Sophia was placed. He drew his ſword, informed the Prince that he had orders to refuſe all admittance to the Princeſs, and compelled him to retire without accompliſhing his purpoſe. Her death, which as I have already ſaid, preceded the deceaſe of George the Firſt about eight months, unqueſtionably prevented her ſon from reſtoring her to the honours of which ſhe had been ſo long deprived.

Very late the ſame day on which I viſited Ahlden, I arrived at this city, where every object recalls the image of another Princeſs, ſcarcely leſs unfortunate than Sophia. I mean, as you will eaſily imagine, her deſcendant, the late Queen of Denmark, Caroline Matilda. It is curious and affecting to contemplate the ſimilarity of their hiſtory. Both were precipitated in the prime of youth from their elevation; and their pretended lovers equally fell by the

the hand of the aſſaſſin, or of the executioner. The two Princeſſes alike expiated their imputed errors, in impriſonment or in exile; and they now repoſe together in the ſame vault, where their remains are depoſited ſide by ſide. Hiſtory, from Julia, the daughter of Auguſtus, down to the preſent hour, is little more than a repetition of the ſame ſuppoſed crimes, accuſations, and puniſhments. It is only changing the name of Pandataria, to that of Ahlden, or of Zell. Sempronius Gracchus, the lover of Julia, periſhed by a violent death, like Konigſmark and Struenſee. The Semiramis of one age, is the Catharine of another.

This place is no longer to be recognized for the ſame city as it was three years ago, when it exhibited the aſpect of gaiety, amuſement, and pleaſure. Now all is ſilent and deſert. Not a carriage is to be ſeen or heard in the ſtreets; graſs already grows in the area of the Caſtle, and hardly a human creature is to be found within

its

its walls. I wandered yeſterday for a conſiderable time through the chambers and galleries, without being able to meet any perſon; till on entering one of the rooms, I diſcovered at the fartheſt extremity a man, whom I ſoon recognized to be Mantel, the late Queen's faithful valet-de-chambre. He conducted me over the Caſtle. In the range of apartments which was occupied by the Queen Matilda, every thing remains exactly as it was left in May 1775, the period of her death. The Caſtle of Zell, which is ſtill a noble edifice, worthy the reſidence of a ſovereign Prince, is a Gothic fortreſs, of a ſquare figure, ſurrounded by a deep moat, having ramparts and baſtions for its defence. In the center is a quadrangle, and the whole ſtructure forcibly reminds the beholder of thoſe antique deſerted caſtles, ſo frequently deſcribed in romance. Though part of it is near four hundred years old, and tending to decay, yet the far greater portion, which was rebuilt, or at leaſt modernized by George William, Duke

Duke of Zell, in the laſt century, continues in perfect preſervation. The apartments, inhabited by the late Queen of Denmark, may almoſt be termed magnificent; but in a few years they will probably ſink into a ſtate of neglect and dilapidation.

You requeſt me to relate the hiſtory of that Princeſs. You deſire to know the principal circumſtances of the Daniſh revolution; the manner of the Queen's ſubſequent life at Zell; finally, the particulars of her laſt illneſs, death, and character. Many reaſons make me unwilling to gratify your curioſity. The revolution of Denmark in 1772, as it is commonly termed, was not, like that of Sweden in the ſame year, a political or conſtitutional revolution, which altered the form of the government: it was only a convulſion of the Court, produced by the indiſcretion of a young and unexperienced Queen, facilitated by the imbecility of a weak and credulous King, who permitted his mother-in-law and brother to ſieze on the admi-

niſtration,

niſtration, which he was himſelf incapable of exerciſing in perſon. When Guſtavus the Third effected the revolution at Stockholm, every circumſtance was tranſacted in open day, and became matter of notoriety. But, the arreſt and impriſonment of the Queen Matilda, of Struenſee, and of Brandt, were performed in the night; and the ſcene was the Royal Palace at Copenhagen. The facts attending that extraordinary tranſaction, are beſides too recent, to juſtify their entire diſcloſure. In compliance nevertheleſs with your deſire, I ſhall ſtate to you the leading events, which preceded and followed the Daniſh revolution. If I do not relate every thing that has come to my knowledge, you may on the other hand be aſſured, that the facts which I record, are authentic.

The marriage of Chriſtian the Seventh, King of Denmark, with the Princeſs Caroline Matilda of England, was one of thoſe alliances in which neither ſimilarity of diſpoſition, nor any other requiſites were found,

found, to ensure nuptial felicity. The King soon abandoned himself to irregularities of every kind, too puerile, effeminate, and dissolute for commemoration. Nor was the Danish Court less a scene of universal dissipation, calculated at once to corrupt the heart, and to contaminate the manners. A young and amiable woman, who saw herself neglected by her husband, while she was at the same time an object of respect and homage to every other person that approached her, could scarcely be supposed to escape the moral contagion of such a scene. Yet, previous to the King's journey in 1768, when he visited England, France, and other parts of Europe, the Queen had so conducted herself, as if, not wholly to escape detraction, to preserve, however, a great share of general affection and popularity. The birth of the Prince Royal, which preceded the King's departure from Copenhagen, augmented the attachment of the people to her person and dignity.

It was at this time that Struensee, destined afterwards to make too conspicuous a figure in the Danish annals, first became known to Christian the Seventh. The father of Struensee was only a deacon of Rensbourg, a little town in the Duchy of Slefwick, where he still continues to reside. He entertained little affection for his son, and frequently, during the short term of Struensee's elevation, foretold or apprehended his approaching fate. When the King of Denmark determined on visiting some of the Courts of Europe, Struensee was appointed to attend his Majesty, in quality of physician; he having previously practised medicine with a degree of reputation and success, at Altona. Brandt, who suffered at the same time with Struensee on the scaffold, and whose two names are now become inseparably blended in history, was of a more elevated extraction. His family, though not noble, was very respectable, originally from Holstein, in the vicinity of Hamburgh, where his

ancestors were established. He possessed many qualities calculated to advance their possessor in a court; his manners being polished, his address easy, and his conversation lively, as well as amusing. Throughout his life, no less than at his death, he manifested personal courage; but in principle and virtue he was totally deficient.

Among the favourites of Christian the Seventh, who were the companions of his pleasures, Brandt occupied a distinguished place; and he was commonly selected from among the crowd of courtiers, to make one of the party at the King's private suppers. Having been appointed a Gentleman of the Bed-chamber, he flattered himself that he should be placed on the list of those, whom his Danish Majesty named to accompany him on his intended travels. It was not therefore without equal surprise and mortification that Brandt found his name excluded. Attributing his rejection to the enmity and rivality of the young Count Holcke, who had supplanted him, as he

conceived, in his Sovereign's favour; and ſtung with a preference ſo injurious to his views, Brandt endeavoured to procure the diſgrace of Holcke, by means of an anonymous letter addreſſed to the King, accuſing that favourite of diſaffection. But, the attempt proved ruinous to himſelf: the letter having been ſoon traced to its real author, Brandt received an order to quit Copenhagen in twenty-four hours. He obeyed, and retired to Paris, where he remained in obſcurity as well as indigence. When the King of Denmark arrived at that city, Brandt found means to repreſent his poverty, and obtained from his maſter a preſent of a hundred Louis-d'ors.

Struenſee meanwhile had accompanied Chriſtian the Seventh on his travels. He and Brandt meeting at Paris, they formed a ſort of compact, by which it was agreed that if Struenſee, on his return to Denmark, ſhould attain ſufficient credit at Court, he would uſe it to obtain the recal of the other. During the King's ſtay in France,

Struenſee had riſen to a conſiderable degree of favour; and his Majeſty ſoon after his arrival at Copenhagen preſented him to the Queen with his own hand; recommending him at the ſame time to her as a man of talents, and as peculiarly ſkilled in the profeſſion of phyſic. He was promoted immediately to the place of a Privy Counſellor, and ſoon became as acceptable to the Queen, as he had been to her huſband.

Reaſons of a very delicate and peculiar nature, facilitated his progreſs in that princeſs's good opinion. The King and ſhe having been alienated from each other, in conſequence of his exceſſes, and having ceaſed to cohabit together, Struenſee undertook to reconcile them, and ſucceeded in the attempt. He received every day from both new marks of conſideration and eſteem. Brandt, by his endeavours, was recalled to Court, reinſtated in office, and they were ſhortly afterwards raiſed at the ſame time, to the rank of Counts. Struenſee

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in particular became not only the declared favourite, but was conſtituted firſt miniſter, with almoſt unlimited political power. So rapid and extraordinary an elevation, neceſſarily excited many comments; and envy or malignity added a thouſand reports, injurious to the honour of the Queen.

It muſt be admitted even by thoſe to whom her memory is moſt dear, that her imprudence was great and inexcuſable. Not only in private, but at the theatre, in the ſtreets of Copenhagen, and before multitudes of ſpectators, ſhe manifeſted a very injudicious preference for Struenſee. He was himſelf ſenſible of her Majeſty's indiſcretion, and endeavoured, but without effect, to induce her from prudential motives, to moderate the teſtimonies of her partiality towards him in public. The levity of her conduct was augmented by the impropriety of her dreſs on many occaſions. She was accuſtomed to ride out with Struenſee, habited completely in men's clothes, without any mixture of female attire;

attire: and though this mode is neither uncommon among ladies in the north of Europe, nor implies any immodesty of deportment, yet it tended to increase the popular clamour and misrepresentation.

The King was a passive and quiet spectator of Struensee's favour, as well as of the Queen's attachment to him. Though indifferent towards his wife, he nevertheless esteemed her; nor did he feel or express the slightest resentment at her behaviour. His mind and body, equally debilitated by excesses of every kind, left him without activity, and almost without perception or sentiment. He sunk into a state of imbecility, which while it rendered him capable of receiving the worst impressions, disqualified him from appreciating their truth, or taking any part in the management of public affairs. The administration devolved therefore on the Queen, Struensee, and their adherents: but the Court was plunged in diversions and immersed in pleasures, which were soon to

be succeeded by scenes of a very different nature.

Struensee was unquestionably a man of abilities, capable of great application to business, rapid and decisive in his resolutions, as well as enlarged and patriotic in his views. Many of his measures tended to the amelioration, improvement, and aggrandizement of Denmark. But he neither possessed the profound policy, the severe vigilance, nor the superior judgment, requisite for maintaining him in his sudden elevation. Towards the close of his ministry, he acted without foresight or address; as if, with the difficulties which augmented round him, he lost the strength and presence of his understanding. At the head of his enemies, who were numerous, powerful, and implacable, appeared the Queen Dowager, and her son Prince Frederic. The former, Juliana Maria of Brunswick Wolfenbuttel, widow of Frederic the Fifth, the late King, had assuredly not received from nature any pre-eminent qualities for government.

ment. Her ſon, who ſeemed ſtill leſs formed to occupy a diſtinguiſhed place in the hiſtory of his country, inſpired little reſpect or apprehenſion. But the indiſcretion of the young Queen, and the fatal ſecurity of Struenſee, ſupplied every defect. Patience and perſeverance were alone neceſſary in order to ripen the machinations prepared for their deſtruction.

Several perſons of the firſt quality and conſideration in Denmark, impelled by ambition, indignant at the preference ſhewn to an obſcure ſtranger, or irritated by their excluſion from office, joined the Queen Dowager's party. Among the chief, were Counts Rantzau and Oſtein, General Eichſted, and Colonel Koller Banner. Various conſultations were held by them, relative to the meaſures proper to be purſued; and towards the cloſe of the year 1771, they finally determined to proceed to action without further delay. On the firſt day of January every year, it was cuſtomary at Copenhagen for the populace

to

to assemble near the Royal Palace, where an ox, roasted whole, was distributed among them. As the Court and Royal Family usually assisted at this festivity, the Queen Matilda had signified her intention of being present, accompanied by the King, and their ordinary attendants. Such an occasion appeared too favourable to be neglected. The partizans of Juliana Maria and Prince Frederic, having gained over a sufficient number of the soldiery, came to a resolution of breaking in among the crowd, arresting their opponents, and even of putting them to death upon the spot, if any resistance were attempted. Nothing could have apparently prevented the success of the plan, which would have been greatly facilitated by the confusion arising from the assemblage of people: but it was disconcerted when near its execution, by an anonymous warning sent to a nobleman in the Queen Matilda's household, enjoining him to be absent, if he regarded his safety. He immediately communicated to her Majesty

Majeſty this alarming intimation, which ſhe by no means deſpiſed; and on pretence of indiſpoſition, ſhe announced her reſolution not to be preſent at the ceremony. So unexpected a failure on her part, fruſtrated the project, without inſpiring her or her adherents with ſufficient caution againſt future attempts of a ſimilar nature; while their enemies, diſconcerted, but not diſheartened, prepared to renew their attack under more favourable circumſtances.

They at length reſolved to ſeize on the Queen Matilda, and the principal perſons attached to her, at the cloſe of a maſked ball, which was to be given in the Royal Palace, upon the 15th of January, 1772. Count Rantzau undertook the delicate commiſſion of perſuading the King to ſign the order for the purpoſe, and of putting it afterwards into execution. To Koller Banner was aſſigned the important taſk of arreſting Struenſee; and all the inferior arrangements for enſuring ſucceſs were ſettled with great dexterity. They were never-

nevertheleſs on the point of being overturned, at the very moment when all was ripe for action. Rantzau, upon whoſe courage, fidelity, and ſecrecy, no reliance could be placed, determined not only to withdraw his aſſiſtance from the party in which he had enliſted, but to reveal the whole conſpiracy to Struenſee. On the afternoon of the 15th of January, only a few hours before the ball was to begin, he wrote to the miniſter, deſiring to ſee him at his own apartments, upon buſineſs of the utmoſt importance. Struenſee intended to have gone thither; but, being detained by a variety of affairs till it grew late, he went ſtrait to the ball, and thereby loſt the faireſt occaſion of extricating himſelf from deſtruction.

Rantzau, thus diſappointed in his deſign of betraying his aſſociates, was not however the leſs reſolved to renounce all further participation in their ſchemes. He ſent a meſſage therefore to the Queen Dowager, acquainting her that he ſhould be unable to

come

come to the Palace, or to execute the part aſſigned him in the projected revolution, on account of a violent attack of the gout, to which diſeaſe he was conſtitutionally ſubject. In order to ſupport the deception, he cauſed his legs to be wrapped in flannels. This meſſage, at once embaraſſing and unexpected, threw the perſons to whom it was addreſſed, into the utmoſt conſternation. But, the ſpirit and deciſion of Koller Banner ſoon ſurmounted Rantzau's pretended indiſpoſition. Having entreated the Queen Juliana Maria not to be alarmed, and conſcious of the motives from which Rantzau acted, Koller Banner ſent his own ſedan chair to the Count's houſe. It was accompanied by two grenadiers with their bayonets fixed, who had poſitive orders to put him into the chair at all events, and to conduct him to the Palace without an inſtant's delay. They were authorized to uſe force, if neceſſary; but Rantzau, aware that reſiſtance was vain, ſubmitted, was carried to Court, and

and performed the ſervice expected from him. Koller Banner was indeed the animating ſoul of the enterprize, to whoſe coolneſs, preſence of mind, and intrepidity, its ſucceſs muſt be principally attributed. During the whole night, while at the ball, he maintained the utmoſt ſerenity of deportment, and played at the ſame game of cards with Monſieur Berger, whom he immediately afterwards arreſted.

Two circumſtances which took place in the courſe of the evening, excited remark, and ought to have awakened ſuſpicion. The King, Queen, and their attendants, entered the ball room before ten o'clock; but Prince Frederick, contrary to his uſual cuſtom, and in ſome meaſure contrary to the reſpect due from him towards their Majeſties, did not arrive till more than an hour later. His countenance was fluſhed, and his diſordered looks betrayed the agitation of his mind. As ſoon as he came, the Queen advancing towards him ſaid, "Vous venez "d'arriver bien tard, mon frere: Qu'avez

"vous?"

"vous?"---"C'eſt que j'ai eu des affaires, "Madame," replied he. "Il me ſemble," anſwered ſhe gaily, "que vous auriez "mieux fait de penſer a vos plaiſirs qu'a "vos affaires, pendant une ſoiree de bal." The Prince made little or no reply, and the converſation ended. The other incident was ſtill more calculated to have alarmed Struenſée, if he had not overlooked it, or had not with a ſort of infatuation omitted the neceſſary precautions for his ſafety. As he was conſcious of his own unpopularity, and dreaded ſome commotion among the people, he had ſurrounded the ball-room with guards, on whoſe fidelity he knew, or believed, he could rely. But, the officer who commanded them, having been gained by the oppoſite party, changed the ſoldiers, ſubſtituting others in their place. The alteration was even noticed by ſome of Struenſee's friends; though, which ſeems ſtill more extraordinary, it did not impreſs them with ſufficient apprehenſion to produce any inquiry in conſequence.

Between twelve and one o'clock the King

quitted the room, and retired. The Queen, who continued there to a later hour, ſupped with a large party in her own box, to which Prince Frederic was not admitted, nor invited. After dancing the greater part of the night with Struenſee, her Majeſty and he both withdrew nearly at the ſame time, about three o'clock. The company ſoon followed, and the two laſt perſons who remained in the ball-room, were Brandt and the Counteſs d'Oſtein, between whom there ſubſiſted an attachment. They were engaged in converſation, when the maſter of the revels went up to Brandt, and ſaid, "Every one is gone; I muſt order the lights to be extinguiſhed."—"I will give directions for that purpoſe," replied Brandt; "leave it to me." A ſingular fatality ſeems to have attended the Queen and her friends. In order to ſeize upon ſo numerous a body of men, many of whom, it was unqueſtionable, would attempt reſiſtance, if they were not taken by ſurpriſe, and ſeparately; it was requiſite to attack them when unprepared and alone.

alone. The Countefs d'Oftein had invited a felect company of ladies and gentlemen, among whom were Struenfee and Brandt, to drink tea in her apartments, after the conclufion of the ball. If this party had taken place, it would have fruftrated the plans of the Queen Dowager and her fon. They would probably have efteemed it too dangerous, to attack feveral of the firft men in Denmark, collected together in one room, who were capable of defperate refiftance, and might have either efcaped, or have defended themfelves fuccefsfully. In the progrefs of fuch an attempt, the Royal Palace, where the principal among them were lodged, muft no doubt, have been rendered a fcene of carnage and horror. But one of the ladies who was invited, Madame de Schimmelman, having a violent head-ach, excufed herfelf: Madame de Bulow, unwilling to go without her friend, made her excufes likewife; and the Countefs d'Oftein being then the only remaining female of the party, it was renounced. Every perfon retired to their re-

ſpective apartments, and left the chiefs of the enterprize free to commence their operations.

The moment for action was now arrived. Rantzau, without loſs of time, entering the King's bedchamber, awoke him, and acquainted him that there exiſted a conſpiracy againſt his perſon and dignity, at the head of which were his wife, Struenſee, and various of their aſſociates. He then beſought his Majeſty to conſult his own ſecurity, by inſtantly ſigning an order for their arreſt, which Rantzau tendered him; uſing every argument to enforce his ſolicitations. But, Chriſtian, though feeble in mind, and taken by ſurprize, not only heſitated, but refuſed to affix his name to the paper. The Queen Dowager and Prince Frederic were therefore called in to his bedſide; and by means of expoſtulations, ſupported by exaggerated or falſe repreſentations of the danger which he incurred from delay, they at length procured his reluctant conſent. He ſigned the

order, which was immediately carried into execution.

Koller Banner repairing to Struensee's chamber, forced open the door, and seized him in his bed. He was asleep when this event took place, for which he was so totally unprepared, that having no clothes near the bedside, except his masquerade dress, he was necessitated to put on the domino breeches which he had worn at the ball, for want of any others. The weather being extremely cold, he was permitted to wrap himself in his fur cloak, and they then conveyed him in a coach to the citadel. While Koller Banner arrested Struensee, Beringshold, a man of a desperate but intrepid character, accompanied by some soldiers, entered the room in which Brandt was lodged. Unlike Struensee, he started up, seized his sword, and prepared for resistance; but on the soldiers, by Beringshold's orders, levelling their pieces, and threatening to fire on him, he gave up his sword, and surrendered him-

felf prifoner. In the fame manner as his companion in misfortune, he was inftantly conducted under a guard, in a coach, to the citadel. Various other noblemen and gentlemen, their adherents, where at the fame time put into a ftate of arreft, or had centinels placed at the door of their apartments.

But the moft dangerous and important act of the enterprife ftill remained to perform; that of arrefting the Queen Matilda. After retiring from the ball, fhe continued fome time in her own room, before fhe went to bed, occupied in fuckling her little daughter, who was ftill at the breaft. Struenfee's chamber being fituated directly under the Queen's, the noife which Koller Banner made in feizing his perfon, was indiftinctly heard by her Majefty. Unfortunately fhe by no means however attributed it to the real caufe. On the contrary, imagining that the difturbance was occafioned by the company, which, as fhe knew, was to meet in the apartment of Madame d'Oftein, and

and which party ſhe concluded, had been transferred to that of Struenſee, ſhe ordered one of her women to go down, and to request them to be leſs intemperate in their mirth, as they would otherwiſe prevent her from taking any repoſe. The woman did not return: the noiſe ceaſed; and the Queen, wholly unſuſpicious, having ſoon retired to reſt, fell into a profound ſleep.

It was about five o'clock in the morning, when ſhe was awakened by a Daniſh female attendant, who always lay in the adjoining room. Holding a candle in one hand, ſhe held out a paper to the Queen in the other, which, with marks of agitation, ſhe requeſted of her Majeſty to peruſe. It contained a requeſt, rather than an order, couched in very conciſe, but very reſpectful terms, ſtating that "the King of Denmark, for reaſons of a private nature, wiſhed her to remove to one of the Royal Palaces in the country for a few days." The Queen, ſcarcely awake, in her firſt ſurprize imagined that the note which ſhe ſaw in her

woman's hand came from the Baron de Bulow, her master of the horse; and that its purport was to inquire, whether it was her pleasure to hunt on that day. But, no sooner had she cast her eye over the paper, and read its contents, with the Royal signature annexed, than she instantly comprehended the nature and extent of her misfortune. Conscious that if she could only gain access to the King, she should be able in a moment to overturn the plans of her enemies, she sprung out of bed; and without waiting to put on any thing except a petticoat and shoes, she rushed into the antichamber. There, the first object which met her view, was Count Rantzau, seated quietly in a chair. Recollecting then her dishevelled state, she exclaimed, "Eloignez vous, Monsieur le Comte, pour l'amour de Dieu, car je ne suis pas presentable." She immediately ran back into her chamber, and hastily threw on some clothes assisted by her women.

On

On attempting a ſecond time to leave her room, ſhe found that Rantzau had withdrawn himſelf, after ſtationing an officer in the door-way, who oppoſed her further paſſage. Rendered almoſt frantic by this inſult, added to her diſtreſs, ſhe ſeized him by the hair, demanding to ſee Count Struenſee, or the King. "Madam," ſaid he, "I only do my duty, and obey my orders. There is no Count Struenſee now, nor can your Majeſty ſee the King." Having however puſhed him aſide, ſhe advanced at the door of the antichamber, where two ſoldiers had croſſed their firelocks, in order to ſtop her progreſs. The Queen commanding them to let her paſs, and adding promiſes of reward if they obeyed, both the ſoldiers fell on their knees; and one of them ſaid in Daniſh, "It is a ſad duty, but we muſt perform it; our heads are anſwerable, if we allow your Majeſty to proceed." As no one, however, dared to lay hands upon

the Queen, ſhe ſtepped over the muſkets which were croſſed, and ran half wild, along the Corridore leading to the King's apartment. She even forced her way into it by violence; but her enemies, aware that ſhe might try to gain admittance, and juſtly apprehenſive of her influence over him, had taken the precaution of removing him betimes, to another part of the Palace.

Exhauſted by the agitation of her mind, and by ſuch exertions of body, the Queen attempted no further reſiſtance. She returned to her own chamber, where ſhe was aided to dreſs herſelf, and informed that ſhe muſt inſtantly quit Copenhagen. Rantzau had the inſolence to ſay to her, alluding to his gouty feet, "Vous voyez, Madame, que mes pièds me manquent; mais, mes bras ſont libres, et j'en offrirai un à votre Majeſté, pour l'aider, à monter en voiture." She was then put into a coach, which waited for her at the door near the chapel of the Palace. Two ladies, a maid ſervant, the little Princeſs her daughter,

whom

whom ſhe ſuckled, and a Major in the Daniſh ſervice, got into the carriage with her. They took the road to Cronſbourg, a diſtance of about twenty-four miles from the Capital; which, as they drove at a great rate, they ſoon reached, and in which fortreſs the Queen was confined.

Having thus minutely related the particulars of that extraordinary night, it is not my intention to enter on any of the events which followed. They were in general matters of notoriety. All Europe knows the tragical cataſtrophe of Brandt and Struenſee; the former of whom ſuffered for his political and private connection with the Miniſter and favourite of the Queen Matilda. It was not the blow given by him to Chriſtian the Seventh, that brought him to the block. That imprudent act ſerved, indeed, for a pretext on which to found the accuſation; but was not his real crime. While in priſon, Brandt was always gay, and never appeared to apprehend that he ſhould be put to death. His flute conſtituted his principal reſource, and he was accuſtomed

accuſtomed frequently to play the air in the "Deſerteur," beginning, "Mourir, c'eſt notre dernier reſſort."

Struenſee was as much his ſuperior in talents, as he fell beneath Brandt in perſonal courage. While confined in the citadel, Struenſee drew up his famous confeſſion: a compoſition which did more honour to his ability as a writer, than to his conſtancy or fortitude as a man. In it he avowed, or divulged, more than his enemies probably expected; perhaps, more than was even true. At the ſcaffold he manifeſted contrition, as well as puſillanimity; while Brandt met his puniſhment with a ſort of careleſs and unprincipled intrepidity. The fate of the impriſoned Queen was long doubtful, and ſhe probably owed to her near alliance with the King of Great Britain, that meaſures of extreme ſeverity were not adopted againſt her, by the new miniſtry of Denmark. It was propoſed to immure her for life, in ſome of the priſons of ſtate; and the Caſtle of Aabourg in the peninſula of Jutland, a ſolitary and ſequeſtered

tered province of the Daniſh dominions, was once deſtined for the purpoſe. But, the powerful and ſpirited interpoſition of the Britiſh Crown procured her releaſe, after paſſing more than four months in the fortreſs of Cronſburgh. She embarked from Elſineur in the end of May 1772, and landed at Stade in the Hanoverian dominions, where ſhe was received with diſtinguiſhed honours.

It was nevertheleſs matter of embarraſſment and difficulty, to fix the preciſe place for her future reſidence; as neither the ſtate of her finances, nor the peculiar circumſtances attending her ſituation, ſeemed to dictate Hanover for the purpoſe. The Caſtle of Zell, more retired from public notice, ſeemed better adapted in many reſpects. But, it had not been inhabited, except at ſhort intervals, for near ſeventy years, and required conſiderable repairs in order to render it commodious. The Queen therefore was carried during the ſummer, to a little hunting ſeat, in a remote part of the Electorate, not far from the banks of the Elbe

Elbe, named Gœurde, belonging to her brother, His Britannic Majeſty. She remained there in profound retirement with only a few attendants, till the autumn, when ſhe repaired to the Caſtle of Zell, which had been intermediately rendered fit for her reception. The liberality of the King of Great Britain provided her a becoming houſehold, compoſed principally of Hanoverian nobility of both ſexes. The Queen, who was under no ſort of reſtraint or confinement, except that which her rank and dignity neceſſarily impoſed, held frequent drawing-rooms, at which perſons of condition were preſented; and a theatre was fitted up for her amuſement in the Caſtle, where dramatic pieces were frequently performed.

Her table, if not ſplendid, was elegant; and the Queen's affability, added to her natural cheerfulneſs of temper, rendered her little Court more than commonly agreeable. Her pleaſures, indeed, were extremely limited, from the nature of her pecuniary reſources: for ſuch

was

was the generofity of her difpofition, that it exhaufted her means, and frequently left her almoft deftitute of money. But fhe was well repaid by the general attachment which fhe infpired. Never was any Princefs more univerfally beloved; and never were the advantages of adverfity, on a mind naturally ftrong, well difpofed, and good, more ftrikingly exemplified than in her. She poffeffed excellent talents, numerous refources, and great accomplifhments. Had her life been prolonged, fhe would no doubt have made ample atonement for the errors, into which youth, inexperience, and flattery, had precipitated her while on the throne of Denmark. She was unfortunately fnatched away in the prime of life, at twenty-four years of age, and after a refidence of fcarcely more than two years and a half at Zell. I drew from Mantel, her valet-de-chambre, whom I have already mentioned, and who attended her to the laft moment, the minute detail of all the circumftances attending her illnefs and

and death. They are too interefting, as well as authentic, not to preferve them, as nearly as poffible, in Mantel's exact words. The fimplicity of the narration is more affecting, than any ftudied recital.

"The Queen," faid he, who was of "a plethoric habit of body, had been "always conftitutionally fubject to inflam-"mations in her throat; and the weather at "the time when fhe died, was uncommonly "warm. On Thurfday the 4th of May "1775, fhe rofe, as was her cuftom, rather "early, and walked out. The ladies who "accompanied her Majefty, though they "ufed many entreaties, could not prevail "on her to wear a capuchin, and fhe re-"turned after a long walk of about two "hours. When fhe entered the Caftle, I "met her. Letting her arms fall, as if "fatigued, fhe faid, "Mantel, I am not "well; I am exceedingly tired, and have "paffed a reftlefs night." I brought in "breakfaft, and fhe continued very lan-

"guid;

" guid; but neverthelefs, made her ap-
" pearance at dinner, though fhe eat little
" or nothing. In the afternoon, fhe com-
" plained for the firft time, that her throat
" gave her pain, and felt inflamed. When
" the card tables were placed in the even-
" ing as ufual, fhe was too much indif-
" pofed to be able to take any part of the
" diverfion. The ladies about her, pro-
" pofed therefore, to have a fofa brought,
" in order that fhe might lie down, and
" look on while they played. Perceiving
" that the Queen was very ill, I prefumed
" to offer my advice, that fhe fhould
" go immediately to bed, to which fhe
" confented, and ordered her women to
" undrefs her. I then implored her to
" fend for Leyfer her phyfician, which fhe
" at firft refufed; but on my repeated im-
" portunity, permitted me to call him in to
" her affiftance. As foon as he had felt her
" pulfe, he was greatly alarmed. "Mantel,"
" faid the Queen to me, when he was
" gone, " I am very ill, and I fully be-
" lieve

" lieve I ſhall die." Though I affected to
" treat her opinion as unfounded, I was
" not the leſs deeply impreſſed with a
" conviction, that ſhe was in imminent
" danger.

" On the enſuing day the ſymptoms
" became worſe, and upon Saturday, erup-
" tions appeared all over her body. Zim-
" merman, the celebrated phyſician, being
" ſent for from Hanover, arrived on the
" Sunday; but, her diſorder, which was a
" putrid fever of a very malignant nature,
" already aſſumed the moſt alarming aſpect,
" and left ſcarcely any hopes of her re-
" covery. On Monday, the Queen's voice
" began to grow inarticulate, but ſhe pre-
" ſerved her ſenſes perfectly. I ſat by her
" Majeſty continually, night and day,
" though ſhe many times commanded me
" to leave her, and go to reſt, as I muſt
" have need of ſleep. I was however ab-
" ſent, only a few minutes at intervals,
" in order to take ſome refreſhment. At
" length, on the Tueſday, which was the
" day

" day preceding her death, as all her
" female attendants were exhaufted with
" watching, and I was become myfelf al-
" moft incapable of further exertion or
" fervice, a common " Fille de Garderobe"
" was permitted to attend her Majefty.
" This girl was the only perfon who caught
" the Queen's diftemper, though it was
" certainly malignant and infectious in
" a high degree. She was feized with
" a violent fever, the fymptoms of
" which exactly refembled thofe of the
" Queen's malady; but, after ftruggling
" with it for three weeks, the girl re-
" covered.

" During the two laft days, the phyfi-
" cians pronounced her Majefty's cafe
" defperate and hopelefs. Her ftrength
" gradually failed, her voice became quite
" extinct, and her fenfes alone remained
" perfect. On Wednefday, the 10th of
" May, I plainly perceived her diffolution
" approaching; and that night, about ten
" minutes after eleven o'clock, fhe ex-
" pired.

"pired. Her women would not, how-
"ever, be perſuaded that ſhe was dead;
"they laid her head on the pillow, and
"dreſſed her, ſtill flattering themſelves
"that ſhe had life remaining. But ſhe
"was ſcarcely cold, before the body began
"to change. At five o'clock on Thurſday
"morning, the alteration was very per-
"ceptible; and all the ſpots on her face
"and neck, which while ſhe was alive,
"were red or purple, aſſumed a black
"colour. So rapid and univerſal a morti-
"fication ſucceeded, that it became im-
"practicable to preſerve, or to embalm the
"body. She was, therefore, put into lead
"without delay, and her funeral was per-
"formed on Friday the 12th, at midnight.
"It was an awful and affecting ſolemnity,
"the corpſe being followed by an immenſe
"multitude of weeping attendants. All
"Royal honours were paid her, and ſhe
"was depoſited in the vault of the Dukes
"of Zell, near the coffin of Sophia, Princeſs
"of Hanover."

These

Thefe were the exact particulars of the Queen Matilda's death, as Mantel related them to me. When he had concluded, I afked if there was any foundation for a ftory, which had been circulated in London, and to which fome credit was attached; that fhe had caught her illnefs from one of her pages whom fhe had vifited, and who was carried off by a fimilar malignant diftemper? "There certainly was," anfwered he, "in her houfehold, a page, who "died eight days before the Queen's fei-"zure. The diforder which occafioned "his death, was a very fcorbutic habit of "body, attended with ulcers and fwelling "in the legs. As he expired in the Caftle "of Zell, the corpfe, when about to be in-"terred, was laid out in a coffin not clofed "down, and placed in a fmall room of one "of the towers, over which was another, "where her Majefty frequently remained. "The two apartments communicated by a "little winding ftaircafe. Before the fune-"ral commenced, the Queen expreffed a

" great deſire to look at the body; but, her
" ladies oppoſed it, and repreſented to her
" how injudicious, as well as hazardous,
" ſuch a curioſity might prove. In defiance
" of their remonſtrances, ſhe perſiſted ne-
" vertheleſs in her wiſh, and went down
" with that intent, to the chamber in which
" the body lay; but, aware of her deſign,
" I had locked the door, and removed the
" key. When ſhe demanded it, I aſſured her
" that it could not be found; and after ſeve-
" ral vain endeavours, ſhe therefore return-
" ed to her own room. It happening in the
" afternoon, I brought tea to her Majeſty.
" We thought that ſhe had given up any
" further intention of looking at the page;
" when, in a few minutes ſhe ſuddenly
" ſtarted up, and before any of the ladies
" preſent could interpoſe to prevent or
" ſtop her, ſhe ran down to the chamber
" where lay the corpſe. Unfortunately,
" the door was then open: ſhe ſtept in,
" and ſtaid about a minute, not longer, re-
" garding it attentively; but, ſhe expreſſed
" no

" no particular horror or emotion at the " ſight, more than was natural on con- " templating ſuch an object. I neither " believe that the body could communi- " cate any infection, nor is it my opinion " that ſhe ſtaid long enough, had there " been any, for her to receive it. Whether " the incident might have made a deep, or " injurious impreſſion on her imagination, " is certainly difficult to ſay. I cannot " however in any degree impute the " Queen's conſequent illneſs and death, to " this circumſtance."

I deſired Mantel to inform me, if there was any ſhadow of reaſon for ſuſpecting that poiſon, or other unnatural means had been uſed, to produce her death. "God " only knows," ſaid he; "I think, not. " The inhabitants of Zell are all as firmly " perſuaded of her having been poiſoned, " as if they had ſeen her ſwallow it. They " accuſe an Italian of having adminiſtered " it to her, though the man had not ap- " proached her perſon, for near or quite a

 " year

"year before her deceafe. He had been "in the fervice of the Great Duke of Tuf-"cany*, and being recommended to her "Majefty for a fteward, was fent her from "Vienna. He proved to be a moft profli-"gate, unprincipled man. When he ar-"rived at Zell, he brought with him a "very pretty young woman, whom he "called his daughter, though fhe was in "reality his miftrefs. While he ftayed "here he contracted a number of debts, "and being unable to difcharge them, he "went off with his miftrefs, to Brunfwic "and Berlin. He has not been heard of "fince. The credulous and prejudiced "people accufe him of having been gained "by the Danifh Court; and they believe "that he adminiftered a flow poifon to the "Queen, before his departure; but, I am "not at all inclined to join in fuch a "fufpicion."

* The same Prince who has since been Emperor, by the name of Leopold the Second.

If Mantel's evidence and opinion were not ſufficient to do away ſo unjuſt and abſurd an imputation, the circumſtances of the Queen of Denmark's diſorder, as well as a knowledge of the general ſtate of her health and conſtitution, would ſuffice, in my judgment, to diſprove the idea of poiſon. I have already remarked, that ſhe was of a very full habit, and at all times inclined to inflammatory complaints. She had been twice attacked with a fever, ſimilar to that which carried her off, in the courſe of the year preceding her deceaſe. The month of May 1775 began with very warm weather; and the Queen who was accuſtomed to uſe violent exerciſe, had probably over-heated her blood by walking. When theſe particulars are impartially conſidered, they ſufficiently explain the cauſes of her death, without having recourſe to poiſon or to infection.

In her perſon ſhe was more than agreeable, and might be pronounced handſome, had ſhe not been too large. It is probable,

if ſhe had lived many years, ſhe would have become corpulent, though ſhe endeavoured by temperance and ſevere exerciſe, to repreſs that tendency. Her complexion, like all the Princes of her Houſe, was very fair, her noſe well formed, her eyes eloquent and expreſſive, her under-lip too large; and in ſpeaking, ſhe had a degree of quickneſs, which nevertheleſs became her. She had fine teeth, ſmall and regular. Of her manners, as well as of her talents, accompliſhments and qualities of mind, I have already made mention. When her hiſtory is better known, and more impartially appreciated. poſterity will do juſtice to her memory. They will place her, if not among the number of great, yet certainly in the liſt of amiable and unfortunate Princeſſes. They will conſider her errors as the reſult more of ſituation, example, and court-ſeduction, than of character or intention. That they were overbalanced and obliterated by her misfortunes, cannot be denied. Her early death

death renders her peculiarly an object, at once of commiseration and regret. It took place at a very critical moment, and is not the least singular circumstance attending her destiny. I shall probably renew my correspondence from Berlin.

LETTER III.

Brunſwic.—Reigning Ducheſs of Brunſwic Wolfenbuttle.—Berlin.—Deſcription of that Capital.

BERLIN, *October* 19th, 1777.

IN my journey from Zell to this city, I paſſed three or four days at Brunſwic, on all of which I dined or ſupped at Court. The Hereditary Prince, to my great regret, was abſent; his military duty and rank in the Pruſſian forces obliging him to be at Potzdam, where the reviews and manœuvres are about to commence, which are performed there every autumn. The Hereditary Princeſs, to whom I had the honour of being known, during the life of the late Queen of Demark, at Zell, received me very graciouſly: but I ſhould be ungrateful, if I did not mention in a diſtinguiſhed manner, the marks of attention which I received during my ſtay, from the reigning Ducheſs of Brunſwic. She is

is a ſiſter of the preſent King of Pruſſia, and poſſeſſes no inconſiderable portion of the genius, as well as ſuperiority of mind, which in this age peculiarly characterize the Family of Brandenburg, as they did in the laſt, the Houſe of Orange.

Time has by no means enfeebled her mental powers, or diminiſhed the animation which prevades her diſcourſe, though ſhe has already paſſed her ſixtieth year. She did me the honour to converſe with me repeatedly and unreſervedly, upon many topics. Hiſtory, polite letters, poetry, philoſophy, travels, were all familiar to her. I have ſcarcely ever met with a woman in any walk of life, who poſſeſſed an underſtanding more enlarged and cultivated. She remembers George the Firſt, whom ſhe had ſeen in her early youth at Berlin; and ſhe recounted to me ſome intereſting anecdotes relative to him, as well as to the old Electreſs Sophia, her great grand-mother. More than once, in the courſe of our converſation, ſhe lamented

the fetters that her rank impofed on her, and the inability which it inflicted of vifiting the various countries of Europe. "How "much," faid fhe to me, "do I envy "you that gratification, the renunciation "of which is dearly purchafed by all that "birth, or fortune, or elevation can be-"ftow!" I was as much penetrated with her condefcenfion and unreferve, as I was charmed by her capacity and love of know-ledge. If fhe had been placed on a more confpicious theatre, fhe would, I am per-fuaded, have acquired great celebrity: but fhe is loft in a German Court of the fecond order, fuch as Brunfwic. Who would ever have heard of Catherine the Second, had fhe remained at Stettin, or at Zerbft, in her original obfcurity? It is fortune alone which can call out extraordinary abilities, and place them in their proper fphere. Neither Richlieu, nor Colbert, nor Alberoni, however eminent their ta-lents, would have denied their obligations to that goddefs.

I have

I have ſaid nothing to you of the Reigning Duke of Brunſwic, who is now about ſixty-four, and in a ſtate of great caducity. I was preſented to him; but he no longer eats in public, ſince he has been viſited by a paralytic ſtroke, fifteen months ago. It is nevertheleſs eaſy to perceive, in ſpite of his perſonal infirmities, that he has formerly been handſome and well-made. His articulation is become very indiſtinct, and his conſtitution totally enfeebled. I could not look at him, without reflecting on the different deſtiny of his two brothers. One, the unfortunate Anthony Ulrick, (father of the more wretched Ivan the Third Emperor of Ruſſia,) ſtill, I believe, exiſts in exile at Kolmogory, near Archangel, among the perpetual ſnows, in the vicinity of the Arctic Circle. The other, Prince Ferdinand commanded, as you will recollect, with diſtinguiſhed reputation, the allied armies, during the laſt war in Germany, and is now altogether retired from public life.

On quitting Brunſwic, which I could not do without regret, the Hereditary Princeſs,

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as a mark of her protection gave me letters of introduction for the Hereditary Prince, her husband; as did the Princess Dorothea, for Prince Frederic of Brunswic, her brother. To the politeness and attention of the latter Prince, I have great obligations, for rendering my stay in Berlin agreeable, as well as useful. He is, like all the Princes of his family, in the service of Prussia; and during the greater part of the year, he resides in this capital. But, he has apartments likewise at the Palace of "Sans Souci," and is one of the few whom the King distinguishes by marks of his peculiar regard and affection. It is from Prince Frederic of Brunswic, that I have received the only minute detail of his uncle's private life, occupations, pleasures, and manner of appropriating his time; particulars, on the accuracy and exactitude of which the most perfect reliance may be placed, and which are objects of the most natural, as well as liberal curiosity!

I must here premise, that I have not been presented to his Prussian Majesty; a misfortune, as well as a distinction,

for

for which I am indebted to the "Tour "round the Baltic." The freedom with which I ventured to animadvert in that work, on the partition of Poland, and particularly on the treatment of the city of Dantzic by Frederic, have excited his Majeſty's reſentment. It was ſignified, through the medium of his miniſter, to the Britiſh Envoy Mr. Elliot, that my being preſented at Court would not be agreeable. I am at a loſs to determine, whether I ought to conſider ſuch an excluſion as ſubject of pride, or of mortification; ſince I certainly cannot either repent, or retract the ſentiments which have occaſioned it. But, the friendſhip of Prince Frederic has procured me an occaſion of ſeeing the King more at my eaſe than I could have done at his levee, by ſending an officer who conducted me, a few mornings ago, to the Princeſs Amelia's Palace, in the "Rue Guillaume," where his Majeſty breakfaſted.

I had there the gratification of conſidering him for a few minutes, diveſted of the

reſtraint impoſed by the forms of a Court. The King of Pruſſia, unlike moſt of the other Sovereigns of Europe, is neither to be ſeen, except on very particular occaſions, by viſiting the capital of his dominions; nor is it at Berlin that his character can be ſtudied, or his actions inveſtigated. So limited and reſtrained is the communication between this metropolis and Potzdam, that ſcarcely any thing tranſpires here which is tranſacted there, till ſeveral days afterwards. The King may be dangerouſly indiſpoſed, without its being generally known, or without the nature of his illneſs being well underſtood. At Vienna, and at Dreſden, they are often better acquainted with the private tranſactions of Frederic, than in his own capital, only twenty miles from the place of his reſidence. Such is the policy, and ſuch are the precautions of that able and extraordinary Prince!

Before, however, I enter on the examination of his character, and the leading events of his reign, I muſt ſay a few words relative

relative to Berlin. They ſhall be few, in compliance with the general principle which I have laid down for my conduct, of deſcribing men, not cities. Unlike Paris, London, or Madrid, this place recalls to the beholder at every ſtep, the image, the genius, and the actions of the reigning Sovereign. It is a ſpecies of mirror, in which Frederic is perpetually ſeen, either as the General, the Architect, or the Maſter. Peter the Great is not more conſtantly preſent to the imagination at Peterſburgh, than is the preſent King of Pruſſia at Berlin. He is beſides, the Palladio of his own Capital. I have ſeen him riding ſlowly through the principal ſtreets, accompanied only by his nephew Prince Frederic of Brunſwic, a General Officer, and three or four attendants; giving exact directions relative to every ſtructure, and examining with his glaſs at his eye, the progreſs of the works undertaken for its improvement or embelliſhment.

Like Peterſburgh, this city is magnificent, regular, and has ſprung up in a great

meaſure ſince the beginning of the preſent century. It exiſted indeed previouſly; but only eighty years ago, it contained ſcarcely more than twenty-five thouſand inhabitants. They now eſtimate the population at above a hundred and twenty thouſand. In the centre of Berlin, a ſtranger finds himſelf completely ſurrounded by a groupe of palaces or public buildings of the moſt ſtriking kind. Several of theſe edifices owe their conſtruction to the preſent King; and on the front of the Opera Houſe, which he built at the beginning of his reign, we read the ſhort and claſſic inſcription affixed by himſelf, "Fredericus Rex, Apollini, et Muſis." His univerſal and creative genius has however been conſtantly intent on maintaining the ſpirit of military enthuſiaſm, in the midſt of the arts of peace, and among all the diſplay of architecture, taſte, or magnifience. We never ceaſe to recollect that we are in a country, where from the ſovereign to the peaſant, every man is born a ſoldier. But, it is in the Garriſon Church, that thoſe feelings

feelings are peculiarly awakened, animated, and called into action.

I was present at the service performed there, some days ago. Nothing in ancient Rome, or Sparta, could have been more ably and artfully calculated to mix the love of glory with the rites of religious worship. Nothing can be more calculated to raise the Prussian soldier in his own estimation, above those of other European States. No relics, saints, or shrines are there to be found: the music, ornaments, and decorations are all military, and all appropriate. Trophies and ensigns, gained in battle, float from the roof in every part of the edifice. They remind the veteran of his past exploits, and carry him, in the midst of devotion, to the scene of his valour at Rosbach, at Lissa, or at Torgau. They soften the anguish of his wounds, awaken the most grateful recollections in his bosom, and render him a participator in the fame of his Sovereign. The four heroes of the Prussian monarchy who fell in battle, Schwerin, Keith,

Winterfeldt, and Kleiſt, are elevated on four pedeſtals, ſurmounted with emblems of war and victory. He who can reſiſt the combined effect of ſo many objects, acting at once upon the ſenſes, the affections, and the underſtanding, muſt be endowed with more than common apathy.

If, however, Berlin ſtrikes by its regularity and the magnificence of its public buildings, it impreſſes not leſs forcibly with a ſentiment of melancholy. It is neither enriched by commerce, enlivened by the general reſidence of the Sovereign, nor animated by induſtry, buſineſs, and freedom. An air of ſilence and dejection reigns in the ſtreets, where at noon-day ſcarcely any paſſengers are ſeen except ſoldiers. The population, much as it has augmented during the preſent reign, is ſtill very unequal to the extent and magnitude of the city. Oſtentation and vanity, more than utility or neceſſity, ſeem to have impelled Frederic to enlarge and embelliſh his capital. The ſplendid fronts of

the fineſt houſes, frequently conceal poverty and wretchedneſs. A colonnade, hardly inferior to that of the Louvre, proves when inſpected, to be only a caſern, or a barrack. We are firſt diſappointed, and in the end diſguſted with this deception. Peterſburgh, though ſituate in a much more inclement latitude, has a thouſand natural and political advantages, which are ſought in vain at Berlin. The Neva itſelf, at the former city, flowing majeſtically from the lake Ladoga into the gulf of Finland, is at once a ſublime and pleaſing object, covered with ſhips, and exhibiting a ſcene perpetually varying as well as gay. Here, the little river Spree creeps along, unnoticed and forgotten. Like London, Berlin is compoſed entirely of brick; for there are, unfortunately, no quarries of ſtone in its vicinity. They maſk indeed the exterior of the houſes with plaſter or ſtucco; but it ſoon falls off, and betrays the original meanneſs of the materials. The King too appears to be more fond of conſtructing than

of

of repairing, though he compels ſuch of his ſubjects as build, to conform to the rules of architecture, and to adopt the elevation or plan of the adjoining houſes.

Nothing can be more deſtitute of beauty, variety, or fertility, than the environs of Berlin. On every ſide ſtretches an expanſe of ſand, and as ſoon as a carriage paſſes the gates, it is buried up to the axle-trees. Scarcely any trees, except firs, are to be ſeen; and even from hence to Potzdam, the intermediate country is in many parts almoſt a wilderneſs. The moraſs which ſurrounds Peterſburgh, is not ſo dreary; and the ſavage rocks, deſtitute of vegetation, amidſt which Stockholm is built, are at leaſt undulated, romantic, and picturesque. Even Hanover, though certainly not placed in a favoured poſition, or in a fertile ſoil, yet is preferable in theſe reſpects to the Pruſſian capital. I ſhall ſay no more however relative to it; nor ſhould I have gone into ſo large a detail, if I did not conſider it as intimately connected with the character and

genius

genius of the King. Other cities are conſtructed or embelliſhed, at leaſt in ſome degree, by the people, in proportion to the commerce, opulence, or grandeur of the State. But, the moſt beautiful part of Berlin, the "Fredericſtadt," is almoſt exclusively the work of Frederic. The "Memoires de la Maiſon de Brandebourg" are ſcarcely more his own production. Indeed, by no means as much ſo, if we may believe thoſe who wiſh to detract from his literary merit. I am however of a different opinion; nor can I ſee any thing in that performance, to which, without the aid of Voltaire or D'Alembert, the talents of the King are unequal. It is only when he condeſcends to affect their manner, that we feel inclined to diſpute his originality.

LETTER IV.

Examination of the Character and Actions of Frederic the Second, King of Prussia.

BERLIN, *October* 23, 1777.

IT is difficult to contemplate, and still more difficult to delineate a character so interesting as that of the present King of Prussia, without feeling a degree of enthusiasm allied to partiality. Perhaps, if we except Cæsar in antiquity, no Prince of any age has exhibited such a combination of talents, equally adapted to the field and to the cabinet, to active as well as speculative life. But, like Cæsar, he is not exempt from infirmities, faults, and defects of many kinds; in some of which he bears too close a resemblance to the Roman Dictator. A reign of seven-and-thirty years, passed in perpetual vicissitudes of war and peace, has given him scope for the

the diſplay of all his abilities. His military ſkill and reſources have deſervedly placed him among the firſt Commanders of the preſent century: while his bold, deciſive, and vigorous policy has added extenſive provinces to his dominions; and has raiſed him from a Sovereign of the ſecond order, almoſt to an equality with the firſt crowned heads in Europe. His legiſlative labors, and his beneficial exertions for enriching, peopling, and fertilizing his country lay claim to our approbation, and are wiſe, as well as highly meritorious. Even his leiſure has not been without utility to the world, while it has been rendered eminently ſubſervient to his own perſonal fame. His compoſitions, hiſtorical, political, and poetic, will be read in future times, if not with admiration, at leaſt with pleaſure and improvement. When we reflect on theſe circumſtances, can we wonder that he has attracted the univerſal attention of mankind, and that every other contemporary Prince ſinks into comparative obſcurity near him?

But,

But, while I admit his claim to immortality, I am not difpofed to be his panegyrift; and much as we admire, we are little tempted to love him. Ambition from the hour of his acceffion to the prefent moment, has been his only real paffion. Neither the faith of treaties, nor the laws of nations, nor the principles of juftice and equity, have ever fufficiently reftrained him from purfuing the aggrandizement of the Pruffian monarchy. The conqueft of Silefia, under all the circumftances which accompanied it, can fcarcely be juftified: the partition of Poland however its injuftice may feem to be diminifhed by the concurrence of Auftria and Ruffia, was an act that revolted every mind not infenfible to the diftinctions of right and wrong. His own glory, more than the felicity of his people, has conftituted, at every period of his reign, the rule of his political conduct. Though not cruel, he is neverthelefs in fome refpects oppreffive: though he rarely permits capital punifhments, he exacts pecuniary

cuniary contributions from his ſubjects, ſcarcely leſs ſubverſive of their domeſtic happineſs, than would reſult from the utmoſt ſeverity of penal laws. His vigilance, it is true, never ſleeps or intermits; and he is felt on the diſtant frontier of Courland, or of Cleves, at the two extremities of his dominions, almoſt as much as here at Berlin. But, ſo was Philip the Second, the moſt odious tyrant of modern times. It is for the preſervation of his own greatneſs alone, that Frederic wakes. Even his pleaſures are gloomy, philoſophic, and ſolitary. Love never invaded the privacy of "Sans Souci," nor ſoftened the auſtere and cheerleſs hours of Frederic's private life. He is great, but not amiable; we render homage to his talents, his reputation, and his victories: but we deſire to live under a more benign and unambitious Prince. We are pleaſed to viſit Berlin, as an object of liberal curioſity; but we prefer the reſidence of London, of Vienna, or of Naples.

Frederic

Frederic the Second is the oldeſt reigning Sovereign in Europe, and has nearly completed his ſixty-ſixth year. His conſtitution, naturally ſound, if not vigorous, ſtill retains its force; and his body is accuſtomed to, as well as ſtill capable of great fatigue. The gout, and the infirmities almoſt inſeparably attendant on his period of life, have indeed enfeebled his legs; but, when once on horſeback, and ſeated in the ſaddle, he is equal to prodigious efforts, ſuſtained for a very conſiderable length of time. He is of a middle ſize, inclined to thin, and he ſtoops in walking or in riding. His face, though now become wrinkled, more perhaps by fatigues and agitations, than from the progreſs of age, or the effects of diſeaſe, is one of the moſt animated and intereſting ever beheld. There is in it a fire and an intelligence, which widely diſtinguiſhes him from common men. Every line and every feature may be ſtudied, and have their meaning. His eye

is

is uncommonly clear and brilliant, though he is so short-sighted, as usually to have recourse to a glass, even when on horse-back. He has a bold and finely-formed, but not an aquiline nose. Of his hair, time has only spared some few thin and scattered locks, about the crown of his head. In order to supply the want, he wears false curls and a long queue.

Nothing can be so simple as his dress, which never varies. It is indeed scarely exempt from the imputation of meanness, and by no means always intitled to the praise of cleanliness. His coat is a plain uniform of common blue cloth, without ornament or embroidery of any kind. On his breast appears the star of the Prussian Order of the "Black Eagle;" but he very rarely wears the riband, or other insignia. He is always booted, as becomes a soldier; and those who see him constantly, have scarely ever beheld his legs. Round his middle is tied his sash. Charles the Twelfth of Sweden might have worn Frederic's sword, without departing from the chara-teristic

teriſtic ſimplicity of his dreſs. It is a military one, perfectly unornamented, with a plain ſilver hilt, to which hangs a ſword-knot. His hat is of a monſtrous ſize, ſurmounted with a white Panache or plume. Either economy, or careleſſneſs, or both, induce him to wear his cloaths as long as decency will permit; indeed, ſometimes, rather longer. He is accuſtomed to order his breeches to be mended, and his coat to be pieced under the arms. It was an unuſual mark of attention to the Great Duke of Ruſſia, when he was here laſt year, that the King made up a new uniform ſuit and hat, in honour of ſo illuſtrious a gueſt. To complete the negligence of his appearance, he takes a great deal of ſnuff, and lets no ſmall portion of it ſlip through his thumb and fingers, upon his cloaths. It muſt be owned that this cuſtom gives him ſometimes almoſt a diſguſting air. Yet, acroſs ſo much neglect and contempt of external forms, I think one may eaſily, without any aid of imagination, perceive the hero, the philoſopher, and the King.

Through

Through every part of the royal houſe-hold, there reigns a ſimiliar ſimplicity, which ſtrongly contraſts with the exterior of Royalty in other Courts. Much of it doubtleſs originates in his diſlike of ſhew, and ſomething muſt be attributed to pecuniary motives. In diveſting himſelf of the pomp attendant on ſovereign power, the King, beſides the emancipation, avoids the expence connected with it; and in this part of his character, as in many others, he reſembles his father, much more than his grandfather. Frederic the Firſt, the moſt oſtentatious, expenſive, and magnificent of Princes, delighted in the pageantry and ceremonial of a Court. Frederic William, the late King, economical almoſt to parſimony, deteſted ſuch vain exhibitions; and was ſupremely happy to ſmoke and drink among his officers, in an obſcure guard-room, or a ſummer houſe. Never was any contraſt greater, nor diſſimilarity more complete, than between the two laſt Kings of Pruſſia.

When

When his present Majesty is at "Sans Souci," he is unattended by any regular guard. A corporal and four soldiers are sent there from Potzdam towards evening and they withdraw at daybreak. Indeed, their presence is not meant for the protection of the King's person; but merely to secure his peaches and apricots from devastation, to which they might otherwise be liable. He reposes in perfect security, if not on the affections, at least on the obedience, submission, and admiration of his subjects. His table as well as his dress are subjected to certain rules, which in some measure mark his character, and which become interesting on that account. No Prince is better served, though without any splendour or magnificence. He is, indeed by no means insensible to the physical pleasure of eating, considered as distinct from the conviviality of the table; but, as he does not like to eat alone, a small number of persons, usually officers of rank, are every day invited to his dinner. The Emperor Gallienus was not a more

more accurate proficient in the ſcience of cookery, than is Frederic. He has, it is true, only eight diſhes generally ſerved up; but each is dreſſed by a ſeparate cook, and each is excellent in its kind. Four are French, two Italian, and the remaining two are accommodated to his Majeſty's particular taſte. It muſt be admitted, that ſo much attention to the gratification of appetite, ſavours more of the ſchool of Epicurus, than of Zeno. Philoſopher as he affects to be, the Father of the Portico is not his model.

In his deſſert the King is expenſive and ſplendid, ſparing neither endeavours nor money, in order to procure the moſt delicate fruits in abundance. The productions of the tropical, as well as temperate climates, are heaped before him. He eats plentifully, and drinks gaily as well as freely, of his favourite wines, which are Burgundy and Champagne. I am aſſured that he commonly ſwallows near a bottle of the former, and of the latter ſome glaſſes.

glaſſes, every day. But in "liqueurs" he rarely indulges, and he touches no ſupper. He ſleeps without either a night-cap, or any covering about his head. When he riſes in the morning, his firſt operation is to pull off his ſtockings, before he quits the bed, and then his boots over them. His hair and beard are diſpatched in a few minutes, by the firſt valet or footman who preſents himſelf. The Princeſs Amelia his ſiſter, uſed formerly to make his ſhirts; but, as ſhe has of late years become incapable, from diſeaſe and infirmity, of continuing the practice, he is obliged to receive them from other hands.

The appropriation of his time, his occupations, and amuſements, is regulated with ſcrupulous accuracy, and never varies except when he is abſent from "Sans Souci." "My uncle," ſaid Prince Frederic of Brunſwic to me, "riſes in ſummer at four in the morning, and even in winter at five, or ſoon afterwards. He breakfaſts quite alone, on chocolate; and till ten "o'clock

"o'clock he is entirely occupied in tranſ-
"acting affairs of ſtate, which he diſpatches
"in perſon, with rigorous exactitude. From
"that hour till near noon, he goes firſt to
"the parade, then walks, or as is more
"commonly his cuſtom, mounts on horſe-
"back, if his health permit. He returns
"to the Palace of Potzdam, or to "Sans
"Souci," before twelve, and ſits down to
"dinner preciſely at noon. After the repaſt,
"he uſually remains ſome time at table,
"where he unbends himſelf in converſation
"with thoſe about him. His afternoon is
"divided between books and muſic, in the
"latter of which he is a connoiſſeur and a
"performer. At ſix, one of his ſecretaries
"enters, and reads to him ſuch letters as
"are addreſſed to him upon literary ſub-
"jects, or any intelligence relative to that
"line of correſpondence. He dictates his
"replies immediately. The [illegible] eats no
"ſupper, but retires to his chamber at
"nine, and goes directly to bed. Such is
"his conſtant mode of life."

The empire of the mind over the body, was, perhaps, never more forcibly exemplified than in Frederic. Neither fatigue, nor perſonal infirmity, nor indiſpoſition, unleſs of the ſevereſt kind, ſeem to have any power over him. He can force himſelf to almoſt any exertions, and of this faculty he has given a thouſand proofs. A ſingular inſtance happened only three weeks ſince. The annual reviews and manœuvres, performed at Potzdam in the autumn, had been poſtponed more than once, on account of his inability to aſſiſt at them in perſon. His complaints were of a nature which rendered it difficult as well as dangerous for him to appear in public; his Majeſty being troubled with boils, that incapacitated him for ſitting his horſe. After ſeveral delays, the reviews were, however at length fixed for a certain day. Contrary to all expectation, the King was on the ground when the troops were drawn up, placed himſelf at their head, and led them to the charge in perſon. He ſupported the firſt day's fatigue

fatigue tolerably well; but on the ſecond, when he attempted to diſmount from his horſe, ſuch was his ſtate of weakneſs, and ſo exhauſted was he, that he immediately fainted. This effect of his exertions did not prevent him from commanding on the third and laſt day, nor from going through every evolution with his ſoldiery.

The annual reviews in the vicinity of Berlin, which uſually take place in the month of May, are open to the inſpection of ſtrangers from every European nation; but in thoſe of Potzdam, the utmoſt ſecrecy is preſerved. A veil is drawn acroſs them; and neither rank, nor intereſt, nor favour, can procure admiſſion to be preſent at their performance. Any perſon who, incited by curioſity, ſhould venture under a borrowed name, or in diſguiſe, to intrude as a ſpectator, would probably experience a ſevere and humiliating puniſhment. Such examples have occurred. The King reſerves to himſelf and to his general officers excluſively, the manœuvres at Potzdam, as a ſchool where

experiments in the ſcience of tactics may be made, which other Princes and troops are only permitted ſubſequently to learn by their experience or misfortune in war. Even if the Pruſſian diſcipline were not really ſuperior to that of Auſtria, France, or Ruſſia; yet the myſtery, and the precautions that are uſed to conceal it from public view, cannot fail to produce a great effect. Obſcurity is one of the fineſt ſources of the ſublime, and always impreſſes with mingled reſpect and terror. Frederic has wiſely availed himſelf of every circumſtance which may augment the confidence of his own ſoldiers, and intimidate the enemy.

It is in the vaſt detail of ſtate which he embraces, that we find matter of peculiar wonder, as well as admiration. No Sovereign ever knew better the value of time, or apportioned it more ſyſtematically. His active and comprehenſive genius, inured to the labour of the cloſet, carries its reſearches through every department of ſtate: while his flexible talents comprehend objects the moſt

most diſſimilar. He ſees, hears, and replies to all diſpatches in perſon, as much as it ſeems poſſible to be done by man. The meaneſt of his ſubjects can addreſs to the throne their petitions or complaints, without paſſing through any official medium; and they are ſecure of receiving an anſwer, if not of meeting with redreſs. Numberleſs inſtances might be cited, to prove the punctuality with which he replies to letters of every kind. Count Dhona, when governor of Konigſberg ſome years ago, was indebted a ſmall ſum to his taylor; but which, though frequently ſolicited, he always declined to diſcharge. The taylor deſpairing of his own ability to enforce payment, addreſſed a letter to the King, ſtating his caſe, and imploring his Majeſty's gracious interference in his behalf. By return of poſt he received an anſwer from Frederic, ordering him to wait on Count Dhona immediately, who would have been previouſly made acquainted with his pleaſure, and who would infallibly diſcharge the debt. The taylor

did as he was commanded, and procured from Count Dhona his money. That nobleman had met with a ſevere reprimand, accompanied with a peremptory injunction not to delay the payment of his arrear. I have ſeen many of Frederic's letters written with his own hand: they are admirably penned, and frequently contain the moſt delicately-turned compliments. Mr. Collins, an Engliſh merchant, eſtabliſhed at Konigſberg, who ſends him annually the firſt ſturgeon taken at Pilaw, never fails to receive an anſwer to his letter that accompanies the preſent, couched in terms of the higheſt good breeding. Such attentions from a Sovereign, are very flattering to individuals. Frederic, who is acquainted with the human heart and its ſecret ſprings, knows the value of that coin, and frequently uſes it in payment.

All the ſcattered rays and functions of royalty are concentered in his perſon; and he can ſcarcely with propriety, be ſaid to have any great officer of ſtate, or even any firſt miniſter. Nothing of importance is tranſacted,

transacted, except by his express orders; of which Count Finckenstein and Hertzberg, who ostensibly occupy the first employments in the administration, are merely the executors. There is, indeed, a nominal Lord Treasurer: but, a hussar, who can hardly write, or read, fills that office in effect. In what manner the King finds leisure for the various business to which he must necessarily attend, may naturally excite surprise: but the application, order, and method which characterize him, partly explain the enigma.

The Prussian finances are regulated with the most severe economy; and it is indeed necessary that they should be thus managed, in order to enable the Sovereign to maintain a military force so disproportionate to the pecuniary resources of his country. It is said that Frederic alone is precisely acquainted with the annual amount of his revenues, as well as with the various and intricate nature of the taxes and contributions. So complicated is the system of the finances, that I am assured, it will be

no easy undertaking for his successor to alter any part of it, without danger of destroying and overturning the whole fabric: such is the intimate connection between its various parts. The King himself is arrived at a period of life, which in a great measure precludes the gratification of active or expensive pleasures. He has, in fact, very few; and even those few are indulged within moderate limits. Elizabeth was not more frugal of the public purse. The maintenance of his soldiery, the security of his dominions, the introduction of manufactures, and the fertilization of the barren or depopulated parts of his territories; such are the objects to which the superfluity of his revenues is generally destined.

Frederic may be considered as the only European Prince, who is at this time possessed of a considerable treasure in ready money; and Magdeburg is the fortress in which it is deposited. Its amount is uncertain, and variously reported; but that it is large, and annually accumulating, there can

can be no doubt. Certainly, none of the Northern Potentates can conteſt with him in pecuniary ſtrength. Catherine the Second, who has not yet by any means recovered her immenſe expenditure in the late war againſt the Turks, is compelled to apply to Holland, for aſſiſtance in raiſing even a common loan. Sweden, as well as Denmark are poor, and both crowns are in debt. Poland, ſince the partition in 1772, is little more than a nominal ſovereignty, inadequate to its own defence. Even Maria Thereſa poſſeſſes ſcarcely any treaſure, though her reſources, dominions, and political power are very extenſive. It is difficult to calculate the prodigious ſuperiority, which ſuch a command of money muſt neceſſarily confer in the firſt moments of a rupture, particularly under the direction of Prince like Frederic. To his father's rigid parſimony, he in fact may be ſaid to owe the acquiſition of Sileſia, not leſs than to his own talents and deciſion. The Emperor Charles the Sixth at his deceaſe, left

left his daughter without a florin in the public treaſury. But, the late King of Pruſſia, more provident, had accumulated the means of facilitating in active hands, the aggrandizement of his family, and the extenſion of the monarchy.

Muſic forms the only exception to Frederic's general ſyſtem of economy. He indulges himſelf in the gratification of this elegant and favourite amuſement, at a very conſiderable expence. His opera at Potzdam and at Berlin, coſts him annually near four hundred thouſand dollars, or about ſeventy thouſand pounds ſterling. To the influence of the paſſion of love, he has never, as it would ſeem, at any period of his life, been long, if at all ſubjected. Various reaſons are aſſigned, and various anecdotes are related, in order to explain ſo ſingular a defect in his character or conſtitution. I do not chooſe to repeat all that I may have heard upon the ſubject. There was however a Signora Barberini, an Italian performer in the opera at Berlin, for whom he ſhewed marks of particular

cular attention and preference. She was afterwards married to the Prefident Cocceii, and now lives with her hufband at Gros-Glogau in Silefia. Voltaire in his "Pucelle," has fketched the King in a fituation noway favourable to his reputation as a man of morals, or of gallantry; but let it be remembered that Voltaire is a poet, and an incenfed one, to whofe hiftorical portraits, at leaft of his contemporaries, little credit is due. Whether the King's coldnefs be the refult of moral or of phyfical caufes, in gallantry of mind he is certainly not at all deficient. On the contrary, it is well known that he is much more eafily induced to grant a requeft made by a woman, than by a man; and he frequently accords to female folicitation the fame boon, which he had pofitively refufed to a general or a courtier. It would be eafy to cite inftances in proof of the affertion.

His clemency, like that of Cæfar, has been fubject of great encomium; and whether we attribute his contempt of injuries, to a fort of philofophic indifference, to magnanimity of

of mind, or to refined policy, it ſtill excites our reſpect. Perhaps, it reſults in many inſtances, from a combination of all theſe ſentiments. He is too much elevated above common men by ſituation and by character, to feel the little emotions of vulgar reſentment. The very facility with which he could puniſh, probably tends to deprive him of the inclination. By a ſingular paradox, the greateſt freedom, or rather licentiouſneſs of complaint and of animadverſion, is permitted under the moſt deſpotic Prince in Europe, even in his capital, and in his very reſidence. He peruſes with perfect good humour, the anonymous Paſquinades which are often fixed upon the garden gates at "Sans Souci;" applauds or criticiſes the compoſition, and frequently orders them to remain untouched. Few reigns have been leſs ſanguinary; and public executions are almoſt unknown throughout the Pruſſian dominions. His treatment of Trenck was undoubtedly very ſevere; perhaps, inhuman. But Trenck was an intractable, deſperate, and dangerous madman,

madman, whom no common modes of punishment could terrify or restrain. Injuries, and attempts of the most atrocious nature, against his own person, he rarely punishes with the severity practised in other countries. Such lenity may even be thought justly censurable, since it tends to encourage crimes, by holding out a prospect of impunity. A verbal reprimand, banishment from his presence, or a short confinement in the Castle of Spandau, the Bastile of Prussia; these are the usual marks of his indignation, which seldom proceeds to extremities against the most profligate offenders.

It is nevertheless only justice to make a distinction, due equally to Frederic and to truth. While he overlooks, or suffers to pass unnoticed, the most virulent and indecent attacks on his own conduct or character, he rigorously chastises crimes against the state. His subjects, though they venture to load him personally with invectives, dare not transgress the laws. Perhaps, the desire of being handed down to posterity, as not only the greatest, but the most mild and placable

of

of Princes, has conduced more than either benignity or policy, to produce the oblivion of injuries which we ſo much admire in him. It is inconteſtable that he has allowed men, who were convicted of intending to poiſon, or to deliver him up to the enemy, to elude inquiry; or at moſt to expiate their crime by exile and impriſonment. All Europe has read and heard of theſe inſtances, which are too well known to render it neceſſary for me to commemorate them.

Few Princes ever poſſeſſed in a more conſummate degree, the art of winning mankind, and of making them ſubſervient to his purpoſes. His converſation, whenever he wiſhes to pleaſe, is full of ſoftneſs; and even the tone of his voice inſpires the hearer with partial ſentiments. Verſatile, where his intereſts dictate condeſcenſion and affability, he can at pleaſure aſſume the moſt gracious manners: and he has ſucceeded in animating all thoſe whom he employs, with an enthuſiaſm to be found nowhere elſe. His officers, as well as his ſoldiers, conceive themſelves ſuperior to all other troops.

He

He is certainly better ſerved, and more implicitly obeyed by his ſubjects, than any Sovereign in Europe; though the appointments of officers, particularly in ſubaltern military employments under the rank of captain, are extremely narrow. Frederic knows how to pay, with equal eaſe and dignity, the moſt flattering compliments, where diſtinguiſhed merit or great actions ſeem to claim it from him.

When the preſent Emperor Joſeph the Second viſited him at Neiſs in Sileſia, juſt eight years ago, his Imperial Majeſty was accompanied by ſeveral Auſtrian officers of diſtinction. Among others was General Laudohn, ſo juſtly celebrated for the advantages which he gained over the Pruſſians in the late war, on various occaſions. The King affected always to call him *Monſieur le Marechal,* though he well knew that Laudohn had not attained that rank; and omitted no opportunity of expreſſing the higheſt admiration for his talents, even at his own expence. When dinner was ſerved, Laudohn, with his uſual modeſty, would

have placed himſelf on the other ſide of the table, at a reſpectful diſtance: but, Frederic ordered him to take a place near himſelf. "Placez vous *à coté* de moi, Monſieur le "Marechal," ſaid he, "je n'aime pas à "vous voir *viz-à-viz* de moi." It is impoſſible not to perceive, and not to admire, the delicacy of this compliment. The converſation having turned on the principal events of the late war, he ſeized the occaſion of doing juſtice to Laudohn's merit; particularly in the battle of Cunerſdorf, or as it is more commonly called here of Francfort on the Oder; where he was totally defeated by Soltikoff and Laudohn, in Auguſt 1759. "Vous avez bien gaté "ma ſoupe à Francfort," ſaid the King to him. "Je vous ai toujours trouvé au "bout de ma Lorgnette," added he at another time. Such recognitions of ſuperior ability, mingled with encomium, do ſcarcely leſs honour to the magnanimity of the King, than to the talents and ſervices of the General.

As a man of letters and an author, Frederic is before the tribunal of the public, who

who have thought his pretenſions to literary fame by no means without foundation; though in his capacity of an hiſtorian, he is not exempt from numerous prejudices and predilections. Thoſe to whom the intereſts of revealed religion are dear, will however neither overlook, nor ought they to pardon, the evident tendency of his writings; that of avowedly overturning and ridiculing Chriſtianity. Even his wit is too frequently levelled at the ſame object. It is difficult to compoſe the hiſtory of our own times, and ſtill more ſo the hiſtory of our own family, without great partialities and imperfections; a remark fully exemplified in the "Memoires de la Maiſon de Brandebourg." He has ſpoken too contemptuouſly of his grandfather Frederic the Firſt; to whoſe vanity or ambition, it matters not which, is ſolely due the crown now worn by his ſucceſſors. However little or puerile, when ſtrictly appreciated, might be the motives which impelled Frederic to aſpire to the Royal, inſtead of contenting himſelf with the Electoral dignity, his deſcendants owe him great obligations.

Prince Eugene, who was no leſs a ſtateſman, than he was a General, when he was informed of the Emperor Leopold's having raiſed the Elector of Brandenburgh to the rank of a crowned head; exclaimed with reaſon, that "the Miniſters who had given their Sove-"reign ſuch pernicious counſel, merited "death." He foreſaw, near eighty years ago, the probable aggrandizement of the new monarchy to which Leopold had impru-dently given birth, and time has confirmed his prediction.

The King is ſtill continually occupied at this time, in literary purſuits and avoca-tions. Like Julius, he means to write his own "Commentaries;" and to tranſmit him-ſelf the hiſtory of his eventful reign to poſte-rity. Prince Frederic of Brunſwic aſſures me, that he has himſelf frequently ſeen the continuation of the "Memoirs of the Houſe of Brandenburgh," in the hand-writing of its author. It commences with his own acceſſion to the crown; and he proſecutes it not only every year, but al-moſt every day. The Prince adds, that he

has neverthelefs his doubts, whether it will be made public, even after the King's deceafe. But, may we not fafely truft to the vanity of the writer, for its being given to the world? He will probably take effectual precautions to fecure the fame, which he has fo dearly earned in the clofet, as well as in the field.

The retirement in which he lives, and the comparatively fmall portion of time that he paffes here at Berlin, render the particulars of his conduct and private life much more concealed, than thofe of other European Princes. Sovereigns, if not perfonally refident in their capitals, are however always acceffible in a great degree, to curiofity and enquiry. They are ufually furrounded with foreign Minifters, courtiers, women, and ftrangers, who tranfmit intelligence of their health, their actions, and their occupations, by every poft. But Potzdam and "Sans Souci" offer no facilities of the kind. It is not permitted to the Envoy of any foreign State, to prefent himfelf before the King, unlefs upon fpecial bufinefs, and

after having obtained a formal permiſſion for the purpoſe. Neither the Princes, nor Princeſſes of the blood, preſume to intrude on his privacy, except by expreſs invitation. No military officer, on the other hand, dares to be abſent from Potzdam without his Majeſty's leave; and ſhould any one venture to ſhew himſelf there, who did not compoſe part of the regular garriſon, he would inſtantly be put under arreſt, and ſeverely .puniſhed. The Prince of Pruſſia, preſumptive heir of the crown, is not leſs ſubjected to theſe rules, than the loweſt ſubject. Frederic paſſes only a few weeks of every year at Berlin, during the carnival in January and February. He leaves his capital to the Queen, Court, and foreign Miniſters; but he will ſuffer no privileged ſpies about his own perſon, to ſend weekly information of his minuteſt actions to their reſpective cabinets. This obſcurity, while it ſharpens curioſity, awakens apprehenſion, and naturally operates to render him more formidable to thoſe who are at a diſtance.

His

His military talents and repuation rest on too firm a basis, to be easily shaken or contested. The defeats of Colin, of Hohkirchen, and of Cunersdorf, though principally to be attributed to the King himself, yet are lost or obliterated in the long train of his victories; from that of Mollwitz, at the opening of his reign, to the one with which the last war concluded, at Freyberg, in 1762. In most of these actions he was present; in many he exposed his person with as much intrepidity, as Henry the Fourth manifested at Coutras, or at Ivry. It was undoubtedly requisite that Frederic should do so, in order to encourage his troops, who, led on by him, never calculated any disparity of numbers. In every action with the Austrians or the Russians, he was always inferior in force. At Lissa he was proportionably almost as much so, as Alexander was to Darius at Issus, or at Arbela. He may indeed, perhaps, be justly censured for having on a variety of occasions trusted too much to fortune. A musket-ball might in an instant have de-

cided the fate, not merely of a battle, but in all probability of the family of Brandenburgh, and of the Pruſſian monarchy. His brother William Auguſtus, on whom the ſucceſſion would have devolved; though a very amiable and accompliſhed Prince, did not poſſeſs energy and talents adequate to ſo vaſt a national emergency as the "war of ſeven years." His ſon, the preſent heir apparent, then a minor and unexperienced, muſt have delegated every thing to his uncle Prince Henry. Had Frederic fallen at Colin, at Lignitz, or at Torgau, the conſequences would have been incalculable. I am aware however, that the ſame obſervation will apply to every commander; but, not with equal force. More than twenty muſket-balls paſſed through his hat or his cloaths, in the courſe of the war; and he received one on his breaſt at Torgau. Three horſes were ſhot under him in different actions. He ſeemed to forget that he was mortal and vulnerable.

It is well known that the French grenadiers, who admired the heroic intrepidity of

of the present hereditary Prince of Brunswic, though it was exerted against themselves; used to cry out before they fired, whenever they saw him, "Monseigneur, evitez le fue!" But, the Croats and Cossacks, with whom Frederic was frequently engaged, were enemies much more ferocious. They would not only have selected him as a mark, and would have deliberately taken aim at him: his remains would have been treated by them with no more respect or ceremony, than the body of Richard the Third obtained from the Lancastrians, after the battle of Bosworth. Even the Austrians and Saxons were animated by personal antipathy towards him; particularly the latter troops whose Sovereign and country, it must be owned, had cruelly suffered under the Prussian rapacity or depredations.

It mocks all calculation, when we reflect that in the course of seven such campaigns, as intervened between 1756 and 1762, he never received a wound of any consequence; nor was ever incapacitated by illness from commanding in person. Alexander and Charles

Charles the Twelfth were infinitely less favoured by fortune in both these respects. Yet Frederic's courage was equally ardent and sublime, with that of the Macedonian, or the Swedish Prince; while in cool, deliberate, philosophic valor, he probably exceeded either. He well knew that his individual fall and that of the state were nearly synonimous; but situated as he was, like a stag at bay, he likewise felt that only the most desperate efforts could extricate him from a situation which has not perhaps its parallel in the annals of the world. As a last resort, he always carried about him the same remedy, to which Hannibal had recourse in the Court of Bithynia. He would no more have been carried prisoner to Vienna, than would the Carthaginian General have been led in chains to Rome.

Modern history presents no object so truly interesting as Frederic during the late war, opposed to two Empresses, and three Kings, making head at the same time, against Austria, Russia, Sweden, France, and Saxony, added to the German Empire.

The immenſe diſproportion of force between the parties; the length of time which the conteſt laſted; the wonderful activity, energy, and reſources diſplayed by Frederic; his very defeats and diſaſters; finally, his triumphant termination of a war which threatened the total deſtruction of the family of Brandenburgh; all theſe circumſtances tend to aſtoniſh and to faſcinate the mind. It is probable that poſterity will contemplate them with encreaſed admiration, through the medium of time.

Great, however, as are his military talents, and juſtly-merited as the encomiums on them may be; we ſhould recollect that as a commander, he ſtood upon higher ground than other men. Amenable in caſe of failure to no tribunal, he could act without control. and could riſk his crown at pleaſure, on the event of a battle. He did ſo in fact more than once. But, no General Officer would have dared to take upon him ſo awful a reſponſibility, or to commit to hazard ſo vaſt a ſtake. The ſuperiority which his preſence, activity, and deciſion of character

gave

gave him, over commanders acting by confined or delegated powers, was incalculable. Nor ought we to forget the discordant principles of the great league which he opposed during the late war. Elizabeth, Empress of Russia, his inveterate enemy, was counteracted at every step, by her nephew, the unfortunate Peter, heir to the Empire, whose singular attachment to Frederic equalled or exceeded his aunt's antipathy. Daun and Soltikoff, the Russian and Austrian Generals, never acted in real union to a common point, or the Prussian monarchy must have fallen under the pressure. "The war of seven years" exemplifies in the most striking manner, how difficult it is for any combination of States to overturn a single Power, conducted with ability, defended with spirit, and roused to great exertions.

His enemies assert besides, not without some color of reason, that the King was guilty of many faults in the course of those campaigns, which detract not a little from his reputation as a General, and even as a man. His temerity, his inflexibility, or his

his imprudence, produced the greatest defeats which he experienced. Towards Marshal Schwerin, who fell at Prague, he is accused of having behaved with injustice, if not with ingratitude. His treatment of Finck, in dismissing him after the surrender of his army at Maxen, was very severe, if not cruel. He more than once cashiered and imprisoned officers of distinguished merit, who had become grey in his service, upon capricious, false, and imaginary grounds. It is pretended with some truth, that he cannot bear a rival, even though that rival should be a brother: a subject on which I may have occasion to say more, when I speak of Prince Henry of Prussia. All these accusations, however well founded they may be, only tend to prove, that with some of the greatest qualities, he is not exempt from many of the errors and defects ever attached to human nature.

It is a very disputable point, whether Frederic is naturally generous or penurious. Perhaps, from character he inclines to frugality; but from policy at least, he knows how to give with munificence on proper

proper occafions. If we appreciate the generofity of Princes; if we reflect from what fource its means are principally derived; and if we confider the objects on which it is frequently lavifhed; we fhall incline to approve, rather than to cenfure, the King's parfimony of the public treafure. He has befides, peculiar juftifications of the moft cogent kind. His barren provinces, for fuch the greater portion of them may with truth be denominated, cannot maintain an immenfe army, and an expenfive Court. He wifely facrifices therefore fplendour, parade, and oftentation, to real greatnefs. Manufactures, arts, agriculture, population, are the objects on which he expends his revenues. He is not only free from debt, and poffeffed of vaft funds ready for emergency; but his dominions have in a great meafure recovered from the ravages and calamities of the late war. A wife adminiftration, in the fhort fpace of only fifteen years, has rendered him capable of bringing into the field a more numerous, and a better appointed army, than he had at the commencement of hoftilities

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in 1756. Such are the effects of rigid and systematical economy!

If however, it were necessary to cite examples of his generosity towards individuals, many well-attested instances are to be produced. The wife of his friend Guichart, (whom he named in ridicule Quintus Icilius, and who is better known by that denomination,) experienced from him great liberality. Guichart enjoyed during many years, a distinguished place in Frederic's intimacy, was constantly admitted to his table, and usually remained the last of any person in his chamber, after he was in bed. They had frequent quarrels, followed by as frequent reconciliations. After Guichart's death, the King purchased his library, for which he paid near fifteen hundred pounds sterling to his widow. He added besides, a present to her of six thousand dollars, and a pension of four thousand more. General Leschwitz, an officer of high merit, who had rendered many services in the course of the late war, received from him no remuneration during several

ſeveral years: but when he leaſt expected it, he was agreeably ſurprized by a donation of lands from his maſter, worth more than twenty thouſand pounds ſterling. It was accompanied by a letter that enhanced its value, couched in the moſt gracious and affectionate terms. Officers, whoſe conduct and circumſtances render them proper objects of his attention, frequently receive pecuniary proofs of his bounty. It muſt however, on the other hand, be admitted, that he is capable of imbibing very inſurmountable prejudices. Like his father, he is iraſcible, capricious, inflexible, violent in his averſions; and conſequently he is on many occaſions oppreſſive, unfeeling, and unjuſt: infirmities of character which augment, as is too natural, with his years and bodily complaints.

In no reſpect, perhaps, is his adminiſtration more unwiſe, as well as more odious, than in his commercial regulations. He injures trade, and impoveriſhes every claſs of his ſubjects by the impoſition of exorbi-

exorbitant duties. Even the mode of their collection is unpopular and impolitic, as he employs French custom-house officers, who are naturally objects of general detestation. This system, equally erroneous and pernicious, to which nevertheless Frederic pertinaciously adheres; forms a problem hard to solve, in the conduct of a Prince so enlightened, and so capable of justly appreciating his true interests. The fact is certain, that commerce declines not only at Konigsberg, Stettin, and Memel; but universally throughout his dominions. The King has, it is true, principles relative to trade, which if they were only carried into practice, are excellent. He professes to consider all monopolies as destructive and injurious; yet, by an unaccountable inconsistency, no country abounds in them so much as Prussia. The immoderate duties, laid upon almost every article of import or export, ruin the merchant.

The partition of Poland, five years ago, by which so fertile, populous, and extensive

a tract of country was added to the Prussian Crown; it was naturally supposed, would enrich the city of Konigsberg. That capital, from its position, vicinity, and local advantages, seemed to be so placed, as necessarily to attract the trade of the newly acquired provinces. I am assured nevertheless, by persons whose testimony is unexceptionable, that so far from having derived any benefit by the seizure of Polish Prussia; on the contrary, their commercial advantages are diminished since that event. The causes are simple and obvious; the part of Poland which previously furnished Konigsberg with the most valuable articles of exportation, is in consequence of the late dismemberment, become subject to the empire of Russia. Of course, its productions are carried down the Duna to Riga, instead of being transported as heretofore, by the rivers Russe and Pregel, to Konigsberg. I am far from asserting that the Royal revenues have received no increase by the acquisition of Polish Prussia; on the contrary,

they

they are much enlarged. But, the Sovereign may be rich, while the majority of the people are poor, oppreſſed, and wretched: a political truth which is exemplified in many parts of the Pruſſian dominions.

On a review of the King's character, we cannot miſtake the maſter-ſpring of all his actions. Every paſſion and every purſuit are evidently ſubordinate to the aggrandizement of his houſe; to the ſecurity and augmentation of his political power. Ruſſia, Saxony, Sweden, England, and France, have been by turns his allies or his enemies, as circumſtances have varied. The Cabinet of Vienna alone he conſiders as ſyſtematically inimical. Never was a Prince more calculated to elevate the family of Brandenburgh, at the expence of that of Auſtria. Sileſia, the firſt conqueſt of his arms, has been retained againſt the utmoſt exertions of Maria Thereſa, by eleven campaigns, by torrents of human blood, and by the greateſt efforts of military ſkill. He has ſince acquired, without drawing the

ſword,

ſword, another province ſtill more fertile, and hardly leſs extenſive, Poliſh Pruſſia. It comprehends the courſe of the river Viſtula, from the gates of Thorn to thoſe of Dantzic: and renders him maſter of the moſt valuable exports of Poland. He has, in a word, ſince his acceſſion, materially altered the balance of power in Europe; and has nearly doubled in extent, as well as in revenues, the territories which devolved to him at the death of his father, about thirty-ſeven years ago.

Upon no European Sovereign are the regards of mankind directed with ſo much apprehenſion and ſolicitude, as on Frederic. From his retreat at "Sans Souci," though infirm and declined in years, he ſtill awes the Cabinets of the North, who know by experience his promptitude and reſources. At this moment he has ſomewhat above two hundred thouſand effective ſoldiers under arms, immenſe magazines, experienced commanders, well-regulated revenues, and an ample treaſure. If to ſo many points of ſuperiority, we add his perſonal

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reputation, and the diſcipline of his troops, we ſhall not wonder that he is formidable to his neighbours. To his ſubjects he is rather an object of admiration, not wholly unmixed with terror, than of affection. They derive a national vanity from the fame, the conqueſts, and the talents of ſo great a Prince; but they pay dearly for his celebrity and atchievements. It is at the price of their tranquillity that he has gained his laurels; it is by the ſame ſacrifice that he muſt maintain them.

The augmentation of the Pruſſian monarchy brings with it no relaxation of taxes, no alleviation of burdens. On the contrary, new levies and greater armies are requiſite, in order to ſupport his acquiſitions. He is compelled to ſtretch the nerves of the ſtate, and to exert efforts above its natural ſtrength. The vicinity and jealouſy of Auſtria, added to the prodigious extent of territory poſſeſſed by Maria Thereſa, render his tenure of Sileſia in no ſmall degree inſecure. While Frederic

 himſelf

himſelf ſurvives, to regulate the machine which with ſo much labour and ability he has conſtructed, all things may continue proſperous. But, it is difficult to calculate how far his death will convulſe or disjoint a complicated ſyſtem, demanding ſuch a variety of talents. There are not wanting perſons here, as well as all over Germany, who conſider the termination of his life, as the æra from which will be dated the decline and fall of the Pruſſian monarchy. Time alone can ſhew whether theſe predictions are founded in truth.

The portrait of Frederic which I have endeavoured to trace, is, I am conſcious, very defective and imperfect. There are many features of his mind and character, on which I have not touched, or over which I have paſſed lightly. In order to do complete juſtice to the merits and demerits of ſuch a Prince, we muſt ſtand at a greater diſtance from him. It does not belong to the preſent age to decide finally, whether he is, or is not entitled to the epithet of *Great.*

Louis

Louis the Fourteenth has been already despoiled of that title, conferred on him by the adulation of his contemporaries. Peter the First seems to have retained it by universal consent. Posterity will pass sentence on Frederic, and will judge of him impartially. Perhaps I have not been able to do so altogether myself. If I were called upon however, to declare whether the picture which I have here drawn, is on the whole, a flattering, or an unfavourable likeness, I should not hesitate to say that it leans towards the former. Or at least, that I could without violating truth, have somewhat darkened the shades, and diminished the lights: but it is an ungrateful task to seek for and to disclose the vices, while we dwell with satisfaction on the great endowments of the sovereign and the man.

LETTER V.

Review of the principal campaigns of Frederic the Second.—Mollwitz.—Anecdote of Marſhal Neuperg.—Lowoſitz.—Battle of Prague.—Anecdotes reſpecting it.—Character of Marſhal Daun.—Particulars of the battle of Colin.—Roſbach.—Liſſa.—Siege of Olmutz.—Zorndorf.—Battle of Hohkirchen.—Death of Marſhal Keith.—Particulars of the Battle of Cunerſdorf.—Surrender of Finck, at Maxen.—Landſhut.—Lignitz.—Battle of Torgau.—Deſperate ſituation of the King in 1761.—Death of Elizabeth, Empreſs of Ruſſia.—Freyberg.—Peace of Hubertſburg.—Reflections on the King's conduct during the war.—His treatment of the Saxons.—Conſtitution of the Pruſſian army.—Foreign Troops.—Deſertion.—Jews.—Invalids.

BERLIN, *October*, 29th, 1777.

AFTER having contemplated the King himſelf in ſo many points of view, it may ſtill be an inſtructive occupation, to ſurvey the brilliant portions of his reign. The campaigns in which the Pruſſian monarchy

narchy has been hazarded, or by which it has been preserved and extended since his accession, are so numerous, as to furnish matter of inexhaustible reflection. Of the officers who distinguished themselves in the first and second Silesian wars, between 1741 and 1745, few indeed now remain. Except Frederic himself, the old Prince of Bevern, and Ziethen, hardly a General of eminence has survived. But, the events of the late war which began in 1756, are still recent; and they form a pleasing, as well as a frequent subject of conversation in every company. Let us cast our eye rapidly over its principal features, which offer the most animating picture ever presented to the human mind. In Antiquity, the second Punic war can alone be opposed to it for duration, as well as for interest and importance.

The great enterprize by which Frederic rendered himself known to foreign nations, and attracted their notice, almost immediately after his accession, was the invasion of Silesia.

Silesia. We must not perhaps, examine too closely, whether it was perfectly just or magnanimous to attack a Princess with whom he had no quarrel; and whose distressed situation rather claimed protection, than ought to have provoked hostility. His pretentions to Silesia were unquestionably well founded, though they were of an antient date, and were only revived at that juncture, on account of the apparent facility which the death of the emperor Charles the Sixth offered, for making them effective. The battle of Mollwitz, a little village in Upper Silesia, confirmed to Prussia that valuable acquisition. It took place on the 10th of April 1741, and is the first general action in which the King was ever present; though he had served under Prince Eugene, in the Imperial army, before Philipsburg, during the inglorious campaign of 1734. Marshall Neuperg commanded the Austrians at Möllwitz; the superiority of whose cavalry had nearly decided the fortune of the day, and perhaps the future fate of Frederic himself. It is admitted that he

was borne away in the rout of his troops; and it is not leſs certain that to the abilities of Schwerin, he was principally indebted for ſnatching from the Auſtrian General the victory, which he had almoſt gained. Thoſe who attribute the King's flight to a want of perſonal courage, muſt however know his character very imperfectly. Any ſuch imputation is contradicted by the whole tenor of his life. But it is aſſerted, and I believe not without reaſon, that he never cordially forgave Schwerin for having rendered a ſervice too important in itſelf, as well as too wounding to the vanity of a Sovereign ſuch as Frederic.

More than two years afterwards, in 1743, his late Britannic Majeſty George the Second, being at his head-quarters at Worms, a ſhort time ſubſequent to the battle of Dettingen; entertained at dinner a number of Engliſh, Auſtrian, and Hanoverian officers. The battle of Mollwitz having been mentioned in the courſe of converſation, the King, either by accident or

or by intention, aſked of thoſe who ſat near him, what General commanded the Auſtrians in that action? Marſhal Neuperg was one of the perſons preſent, and immediately laying down his knife and fork; "C'eſt moi, Sire," ſaid he, "qui ai com-"mandé dans cette bataille, et je l'ai perdu "par ma propre faute." So ingenuous and ſo unexpected an avowal, produced an univerſal ſilence. The King himſelf ſeemed to be embarraſſed and concerned. "I re-"peat, Sire," continued the Marſhall, "that "I loſt the battle by my own fault. The "Croats, upon whoſe vigilence and alert-"neſs to diſcover the motions of the "enemy, I relied too implicitly, deceived "me. I had poſted parties of them upon "every road by which the Pruſſians could "poſſibly advance; but they abandoned "themſelves to pillage and intoxication. "Notice was brought me that his Pruſ-"ſian Majeſty, at the head of his forces, "prepared to give me battle. But, not "having received any intelligence from "my Croats, I could not credit the in-

"formation.

"formation. It was not till the Pruſſian
"columns were preparing to form, that
"my own eyes undeceived me. I then
"made the beſt diſpoſitions in my power;
"and if they were not as ſucceſsful as they
"might have been, I only am to blame."
A nobleman who was preſent on the occaſion recounted to me this fact, which redounds highly to the honour of Marſhal Neuperg's candour and ſuperiority of mind, however it may ſeem to detract from his military reputation.

The two Sileſian wars, as they are commonly denominated, from the name of the province which formed the ſubject of conteſt; were ſucceeded by a period of repoſe that laſted eleven years. This is the golden age of Pruſſia, when the King, in the prime of life, covered with laurels earned in the field, cultivated the arts of peace, and ſeemed to have renounced a wiſh for further conqueſts. Content with having added an extenſive and beautiful province to his dominions, he aſpired only to preſerve,

ferve, and to tranfmit it to his fucceffors. But, the Court of Vienna, which never for a moment loft fight of Silefia, fecretly meditated, in conjunction with that of Drefden, to reduce the power of Pruffia. Elizabeth, Emprefs of Ruffia, impelled more by motives of perfonal animofity towards Frederic, than from any found political reafons, joined Maria Therefa. Sweden likewife was induced to declare war, almoft without pretext. The German empire followed the impulfe of its Elective Head; and even France, which for ages had been the enemy of Auftria, fuddenly uniting with her adverfary, laboured to deftroy the only power which could fet limits to its ambition,

Frederic, inftead of deprecating fo vaft a combination, or temporizing till the ftorm was paffed; having penetrated their intentions, did not hefitate to anticipate them. With his ufual decifion of character, he burft in upon Saxony during the fummer of 1756, and made himfelf mafter of Drefden; while Auguftus the Third, King of Poland, unable to oppofe

oppofe the torrent, retired with his forces to Pirna, where his army occupied a poft deemed inattackable. The King leaving a body of troops to block the Saxon camp, rapidly entered Bohemia, where the Auftrians were advancing to extricate their allies. Under thefe circumftances took place the battle of Lowofitz, on the firft of October. It was fought among the mountains and defiles, upon the direct road from Drefden to Prague; and Frederic fhared no lefs the danger than the honour of the day. With inferior numbers and under great difadvantage of ground, he attacked, broke, and at length drove the enemy from their pofition. Marfhall Count Brown, who commanded the troops of Maria Therefa, has been much cenfured for the difpofitions which he made at Lowofitz. He was neverthelefs, a General of diftinguifhed merit and great experience; though perhaps too active and enterprizing in his temper, when it is confidered that he was to oppofe fuch an antagonift as the King of Pruffia.

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The battle of Lowofitz cannot by any means be reckoned among the number of thofe decifive victories, in which the rout of the beaten army is complete. Far from being vanquifhed, the Auftrians only retired on the enfuing day, and occupied a new pofition behind the river Eger, a few miles diftant; nor did Frederic, at fo advanced a feafon, venture to profecute his advantage. But, all the fruits of victory neverthelefs attended it, fince he thereby incapacitated Marfhal Brown from extending affiftance to the Saxons. That unfortunate body of forces, furrounded on all fides at Pirna, deftitute of provifions, and cut off from fuccours; after holding out to the laft extremity, were reduced to furrender themfelves prifoners of war. Auguftus the Third, King of Poland, and Elector of Saxony, abandoning his hereditary dominions, had previoufly fet out for Warfaw; leaving his Queen and his family to the mercy of the conqueror, as Darius did after the battle of Iffus. If Frederic did not equal Alexander in courtefy towards his

his captives; yet, by this able and decisive stroke, at the commencement of the contest, he turned the weapons of the enemy against themselves; covered Brandenburgh, while he became master of Saxony; and was enabled to begin the campaign of 1757, by offensive operations in the heart of Bohemia.

That extraordiniary campaign, the most fertile in battles, reverses, and great events, of any presented by modern history, opened with the memorable irruption of Frederic into Bohemia, followed by the battle of Prague, which was fought under the walls of the city itself on the 6th of May. Few actions have been more obstinately disputed; and there was a moment, when victory seemed on the point of declaring in favour of the Austrians. Marshal Count Brown commanded them, conjointly with Prince Charles of Lorrain. To the desperate courage, and perhaps to the wounded sensibility of Marshal Schwerin, the Prussians were eminently indebted for the victory which they gained. It is unquestionable that the infantry under his com-

mand gave way, and appeared ready to turn their backs. The King indignant at the ſight, and rendered almoſt frantic by the proſpect of defeat, rode up to the Marſhal, and reproached him in ſevere terms, for the miſbehaviour of his troops. Touched to the quick by treatment ſo unmerited, Schwerin inſtantly ſeized the ſtandard of his regiment; and imitating the example of the Decii, devoted himſelf to death. Ruſhing into the thickeſt ranks of the Auſtrians, he called on his ſoldiers to follow him. They did ſo with enthuſiaſm, and ſoon ſnatched from the enemy their temporary advantages. But Schwerin was killed almoſt immediately, by three balls which he received in the breaſt, one of which pierced his heart. He was not leſs deeply lamented by his maſter, than was, Le Fort by Peter the Great; and Frederic has immortalized the circumſtances that accompanied his death, by erecting a ſtatue to his memory, in one of the principal ſquares of Berlin. Schwerin is there repreſented preciſely as he fell, the colours claſped in his hand, and in the act

of expiring. The monument commemorates at once the frailty of the Sovereign, and the merits of the General.

Prince Charles Lichtenftein, who was prefent in the battle of Prague, and who held at that time a diftinguifhed rank in the Auftrian cavalry, has related to me many interefting particulars refpecting that memorable engagement. The weather had been for fome days previous to it, uncommonly hot and dry. Nothing could exceed the clouds of duft which flew up after the action commenced; and when the left wing, which was under Prince Charles of Lorrain's command, retreated precipitately into Prague, the whirlwinds of duft grew fo violent, that it became almoft impoffible any longer to diftinguifh the blue, from the white uniforms. Marfhal Brown having received a wound from a cannon ball, which fplintered his leg, the confufion augmented among the Auftrians, who fled on every fide. Frederic, victorious, laid fiege to Prague, and feemed to be on the point of making prifoners the army fhut up

in the city. But, his own temerity, rather than the inconſtancy of fortune, extricated the Empreſs Queen from a ſituation ſo full of danger.

Prince Charles Lichtenſtein had a brother named Philip, who ſerved, as well as himſelf, in the Imperial troops, and who fell in the action at Prague. No Officer in the army was of more unqueſtionable courage, or more warmly attached to his profeſſion. It being evident, from the rapid march and diſpoſitions of the King of Pruſſia, that he intended as ſoon as he was joined by the column under Marſhal Schwerin, to attack the Auſtrians; every preparation was made to receive them, and every requiſite order was iſſued by Marſhal Brown, on the evening preceding the battle. The principal officers were enjoined to be at their reſpective poſts by day-break; and Prince Charles having been on horſeback for ſeveral hours, had retired to his tent, meaning to take ſome repoſe. But, ſcarcely had he lain down and fallen aſleep, when he was awakened by his brother Philip, who ſhook him, and told

him that he had ſomething to impart of moment. "Do it then briefly," anſwered he, "for I am very ſleepy, and we ſhall "be called be times to morrow." "Charles," ſaid Prince Philip, "I believe you do "not queſtion my courage, nor think "me capable of being depreſſed in mind at "the proſpect of a battle; but I have been "ſo unaccountably dejected all this day, and "I am ſo convinced of my falling to-morrow "in the field, that I could enjoy no tran-"quillity of mind till I had come to you. "There are ſome directions relative to my "concerns, which I muſt entreat you to "receive, after which I ſhall be perfectly at "eaſe." Prince Charles, far from comply-ing with his brother's deſire, and vexed to be ſo diſturbed, rallied him on his weakneſs, refuſed to liſten to his ſtory, and ſent him away to his quarters; deſiring that his repoſe might be no more interrupted, as he ſhould have ſo much occupation on the enſuing day. Repulſed in this manner, Philip re-luctantly withdrew to his tent; while his

 brother

brother, like Don Mathias de Sylva in "Gil Blas;" ſoon relapſed into a ſound ſleep.

From this ſtate of inſenſibility, he was a ſecond time rouſed by Prince Philip, though not without difficulty. "It is vain, Charles," ſaid he, "that you treat me with levity; or "ridicule: my hour is come, and to-morrow "I ſhall fall. I muſt inſiſt upon it therefore, "that you take down my laſt requeſts, which "ſhall be very brief, and cannot detain you "beyond a few minutes." Half a ſleep, as well as out of humour at being ſo repeatedly attacked, Prince Charles at length took a pencil, and haſtily committed to paper ſome ſhort heads of teſtamentary diſpoſitions dictated by his brother. They reſpected principally his miſtreſs and his creditors at Vienna; this done, he again retired. On the following day, having been wounded by a muſket ball, he was carried to his tent; from whence after having been dreſſed, he inſiſted on returning to the field. The ſurgeon and attendants endeavoured to withhold him; but, neither entreaties nor expoſtulations could prevent his following the impulſe of

his

his courage and his duty. He soon received a second wound, which terminated his life in the prime of youth. Had he escaped unhurt, his prediction would have been considered only as an idle dream, and never commemorated. It is the accidental accomplishment which impresses it on the imagination.

I return to the King of Prussia. If that Prince would have been satisfied to prosecute the siege of Prague with vigour, it is not only highly probable, but almost certain, that he must have become master of the place, and consequently have made Prince Charles of Lorrain and his numerous army prisoners of war. Or, if renouncing the attempt to enter Prague, he had only pursued without delay the flying enemy, during the first impression of their defeat; it is not less probable that he might have carried all before him, and have advanced to the banks of the Danube, or to the walls of Vienna. The Austrians required considerable time to rally, and to collect new forces; by allowing it them, Frederic committed an irreparable error. Relying too much on his past success, and trusting to fortune,

in contradiction to the remonftrances of Marfhal Keith, he ventured to leave a part of his army before Prague, to continue the fiege, while he marched in perfon to give battle with the remainder. At this critical juncture Daun came forward; the Fabius of the Auftrians, who by his conftitutional caution, was wonderfully well adopted to make head againft a Prince of Frederic's character. He was of a noble family, and had long ferved with diftinction in the Imperial forces. Naturally phlegmatic, and often irrefolute, he required to be impelled, rather than reftrained. Of infurmountable coolnefs, no dangers ruffled, and no reverfes depreffed him. In his friend General Lacy, who accompanied him, he found the qualities which nature had denied to himfelf; decifion, activity, and energy. To Lacy's advice and exhortations, was in fact due much of the fame acquired by Daun, who highly efteemed him, and confulted him, on all occafions of emergency.

The ftories which are related of Daun's felf-poffeffion in the article of danger excite a degree of admiration, and almoft of incredulity.

dulity. Count Stuart, an officer of Scotch extraction, who ſerved under him during a great part of the war; aſſured me that at the battle of Hohkirchen in 1758, he ſaw Daun giving ſome directions to a colonel of artillery, when a cannon ball took off his head. The Marſhal, though he was ſo cloſe as to be covered with the blood, neither turned aſide, nor uttered a word, nor made the ſmalleſt motion. Perfectly calm, he only addreſſed himſelf to the next artillery officer in rank, ordering him to execute the commiſſion with which he had charged the other. It is well known that on another occaſion, riding out with General Serbelloni to reconnoitre the Pruſſian forces, they were repeatedly fired at by parties poſted in the hedges. The ſhot flying about their heads, Daun was prudently preparing to retire; but Serbelloni, pointing with his finger to an object which he wiſhed the Marſhal to remark, exclaimed, "Cès ne "ſont que des mouches." An inſtant afterwards, a muſket ſhot ſhattered his hand; when Daun turning quietly round, only ſaid, "Il me "paroit au moins, que les mouches ont piqués."

It

It was at Colin that Frederic for the firſt time fully experienced the inſtability of fortune. His preceding victories appear to have ſomewhat intoxicated him, and to have induced him to truſt too much to the ſuperiority of his genius, or his arms. Marſhal Brown having been rendered incapable of commanding, in conſequence of his wound; and Prince Charles of Lorrain being ſhut up in Prague; Daun collected the ſcattered remains of the Auſtrians, who were ſoon joined by new forces. About eleven o'clock in the morning of the 18th of June 1757, his Pruſſian Majeſty appeared in ſight, and inſtantly prepared for battle. Daun's headquarters were ſtationed at the little village of Chotzemitz, near the town of Colin, on an eminence; from whence, with a teleſcope in his hand, he calmly and attentively ſurveyed every diſpoſition of his enemy. He remarked them long in ſilence; and at length taking the glaſs from his eye, "Ma foi," ſaid he, "il me ſemble que le Roi doit perdre aujourd'huy."

Frederic commenced the attack, after a variety of manœuvres, at two in the afternoon. The Auſtrians, in the beginning were thrown into ſuch confuſion, that Marſhal Daun, apprehenſive of an entire defeat, iſſued orders for ſecuring his retreat, and for removing the artillery without delay. But, two regiments of Saxons newly raiſed, conſiſting principally of young recruits who had ſcarcely ſeen any ſervice, were highly inſtrumental in checking the ardour of the Pruſſians. They repulſed, and finally drove back the enemy. Another extraordinary circumſtance impoſſible to have been foreſeen, materially contributed to decide ultimately the fate of the action in favour of Daun. One of the Pruſſian columns as it marched up, was annoyed by a party of Croats ſtationed in a wood, who kept up a briſk fire on their flank. The King when informed of it, diſpached an Aide-de-camp to order a regiment of the column to enter the wood, and to diſlodge the Groats. But, the officer who carried the meſſage, forgot, or neglected to cauſe

cause the column at the same time to advance. On the contrary, it was stopped for a considerable time, while the regiment sent to attack the Croats, executed that commission. If instead of halting, the column had rapidly filled up the interval, had advanced, opened, and formed; it was supposed they might have done great execution, and perhaps have totally changed the aspect of affairs. When at last they came up, it was too late to be of any effectual service. The King made several desperate efforts to carry by force the Austrian lines; but, his troops, disheartened and fatigued, could not be induced to continue their attacks. Towards eight in the evening the action ceased, the Prussians fled, and the rout became general. Frederic, compelled to raise the siege of Prague precipitately, evacuated Bohemia, and retired in some disorder towards the confines of Saxony.

Never was victory more opportunely gained, nor more important in its consequences. The Austrian army, inclosed within the walls of Prague, pressed by famine, and

diminished

diminiſhed by ſickneſs, could not long have held out the place. Nor, had Daun been vanquiſhed at Colin, could any new efficient body of forces have been ſpeedily oppoſed to the Pruſſians. They might have advanced to the vicinity of Vienna, and have driven Maria Thereſa from her capital, as had been done ſixteen years before by the French and Bavarians. So ſignal a ſervice juſtly procured Daun a prodigious reputation, and the death of Marſhal Brown naturally placed him in the ſupreme command, of the Auſtrian armies. Brown expired at Prague, in conſequence of his wound, accelerated by a conſumptive habit of body. His enemies pretended that the chagrin which he felt at Daun's extraordinary ſucceſs, when contraſted with his own recent defeats at Prague, and at Lowoſitz, haſtened his end. He affected however, to participate in the general congratulations offered to Daun on the victory of Colin; and as a teſtimony of his eſteem for him, Brown ordered his beſt Engliſh horſe to be carried to that commander,

as ſoon as he received the intelligenee, which he ſurvived only a few days.

A melancholy reverſe now ſucceeded to the late rapid conqueſt of Frederic. Inſtead of over-running Bohemia, and penetrating thro' Moravia, into Auſtria, as he expected to have done, he could ſcarcely maintain himſelf in Saxony. The victorious troops of Daun not only preſſed him upon his rear, but in a great meaſure recovered Sileſia: while on the other ſide, the army of the German Empire, united with the forces of France, advanced to attack him through Thuringia. The ſame Prince, who in June appeared to be on the point of dictating peace as a conqueror at the gates of Vienna; before the cloſe of October, doubted whether he ſhould be able to defend his patrimonial dominions from the attacks and inroads of his enemies. But the campaign of 1757 exhibits from its commencement to its termination, an unparalled chain of reverſes and viciſſitudes. At the moment when winter was already begun, and the reſpective armies preparing to retire, Frederic, by two deciſive victories completely extri-
cated

cated his affairs, and refumed all his former afcendancy.

Rofbach, a little village not far from the banks of the river Saal in Thuringia, was the fcene of the firft of thefe memorable actions. It took place on the fifth of November; and like the "battle of the Spurs," in the fixteenth century, might rather be denominated a rout than an engagement. The allied army was led by two chiefs; the forces of the Empire being commanded by the Prince of Saxe-Hilburghaufen, while the French auxiliary troops were under the orders of the Prince of Soubife. The fuperiority of the Pruffian manœuvres was aided no lefs by the temerity of the enemy previous to the engagement, than by their fubfequent panic. Scarcely did they make any refiftance for more than half an hour. During the interview between the Emperor and the King of Pruffia, in 1770, at Neuftadt in Moravia, Frederic gave his Imperial Majefty a moft humorous and ludicrous defcription of the battle of Rofbach; in the courfe of which he treated the French with the utmoft

utmoſt ſeverity of ricidule. General Noſtitz, who was preſent, aſſured me of the fact. Indeed, whatever may be his Pruſſian Majeſty's partiality towards the French language, or nation, he is known to hold their military diſcipline and tactics in the utmoſt contempt.

But the victory at Roſbach, however brilliant, by no means liberated the King from his difficulties, which appeared to be inſurmountable. It was neceſſary to gain another battle not leſs deciſive, over the Auſtrians; who after taking Schweidnitz, had attacked and defeated the Pruſſians, entrenched under the cannon of Breſlau. That city itſelf, the capital of Sileſia, unable to reſiſt an army of eighty thouſand men, had ſurrendered; while the ſhattered remains of the Prince of Bevern's ſmall force was reduced to abandon any further attempt to ſtop their progreſs. Such was ſtill the deſperate ſituation of his affairs in Sileſia, when Frederic gained the battle of Liſſa, on the 4th of December. The incapacity and miſconduct

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of Prince Charles of Lorrain, who commanded the Auſtrian forces, enabled the King, with inferior numbers, and in the ſpace of leſs than three hours, nearly to annihilate that formidable army. Inſtead of remaining within his entrenchments, where he would have been inattackable, Prince Charles unneceſſarily advanced, and offered Frederic battle. Sileſia was the prize for which they contended, and it immediately returned to the conqueror. Scarcely could the ſurvivors of the defeat at Liſſa, reduced to one-third of their original numbers, reach Bohemia; where, I am aſſured, twenty thouſand Auſtrians were carried into the hoſpitals.

Prince Joſeph Lobkowitz, who was preſent in the action at Liſſa, was ſent on the following morning to the field of battle; a ſuſpenſion of arms for twenty-four hours having been granted, in order to allow time to bury the dead. The cold of the night was extremely ſevere; and I have

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heard him ſay, that the ſpectacle which preſented itſelf to his view, was ſuch as no language could well deſcribe; great numbers of the men and horſes who had fallen on the preceding day, remaining hard frozen, and their limbs fixed in the attitudes of pain or diſtortion in which they had expired. Nor was the flight of the Auſtrians after the engagement, leſs deſtructive to them, than had been the action itſelf. Compelled, almoſt deſtitute of baggage or neceſſaries, to paſs the defiles which ſeparate Sileſia from Bohemia, and purſued by the Pruſſians; thouſands ſunk under the weight of their arms, and periſhed amidſt the ſnows, of hunger, cold, and fatigue; or were maſſacred by the peaſants. After five great battles, in four of which the King had been preſent, and in three of which he had been victorious; he ſtill retained poſſeſſion of Saxony, had reconquered Sileſia, and menaced the Empreſs Queen with a new irruption into her dominions, on the return of ſpring.

The campaign of 1758, leſs brilliant and varied than the one which we have juſt reviewed, diſplays nevertheleſs the firm character and vaſt reſources of Frederic, under circumſtances the moſt adverſe, augmented by defeat. After retaking Schweidnitz, the only remaining acquiſition of the enemy, he burſt unexpectedly into Moravia, early in the ſpring, and inveſted Olmutz, the capital. Had he ſucceeded before it, nothing could have prevented his penetrating to Vienna. It is however the opinion of almoſt every officer, Pruſſian, Auſtrian, or Saxon, with whom I ever converſed on the ſubject, that the King acted injudiciouſly in directing his arms againſt Moravia. If, inſtead of undertaking a ſiege ſo hazardous and difficult as Olmutz, he had entered Bohemia early in May, no effectual oppoſition could have been made to him by Marſhal Daun, whoſe army was ſtill almoſt wholly in the hoſpitals. But while the Pruſſians continued before Olmutz, that commander aſſembled his troops. Laudohn, who afterwards ſignalized himſelf ſo

much in the ſubſequent campaigns, having defeated a convoy of proviſions on its way to the Pruſſian camp, compelled Frederic to renounce his enterprize. He retired; but it was the retreat of a Lion, who turns upon his purſuers. Fruſtrated, not vanquiſhed; formidable even in defeat; carrying with him all his artillery and his baggage, he left to Daun little more than a negative triumph.

New and equally formidable enemies waited for him on the banks of the Oder, whom it was indiſpenſable to expel from his dominions. The Muſcovites, after ravaging the kingdom of Pruſſia, had entered the Electorate of Brandenburgh, and were advancing towards Berlin, conducted by General Fermer. Frederic gave them battle at the little village of Zorndorf, not far from Cuſtrin upon the Oder; and on his ſide it might be termed a carnage, rather than an action. But neither the fury of his artillery, the valor and diſcipline of his infantry, nor the repeated charges of his cavalry, could compel the Ruſſians to recede a foot; much

leſs

leſs to turn their backs, or take to flight. During near thirteen hours, from ſix in the morning till ſeven in the evening of the 25th of Auguſt, they withſtood, unmoved, every effort of the Pruſſian tactics. After the ſlaughter of twenty-one thouſand men, they ſtill diſdained to retreat, and night alone terminated the combat. But the Ruſſian commander, by immediately falling back towards Poland, while he ſeemed to yield the honor of the victory to Frederic, allowed him time likewiſe to fly to the aſſiſtance of his brother.

It was become neceſſary to extricate Prince Henry, whom Daun had already ſurrounded in the vicinity of Dreſden. The King's approach effected this object; but, not content with obliging the Auſtrians to abandon their project, he raſhly attempted to cut off their communication with Bohemia. Regardleſs of the advice and remonſtrances of Marſhal Keith, he perſiſted for that purpoſe to occupy a poſition at the village of Hohkirchen, near Bautzen, in Luſatia. Keith predicted to him

 that

that he would be there attacked by Daun, and afferted that the poft was untenable againft fuperior numbers. His apprehenfions were flighted by the King, and the event foretold by Keith took place. Favored by the night and a thick fog, Daun, on the 14th of October, furprized the Pruffian camp, drove their troops from the heights of Hohkirchen, and gained a fignal victory. But Frederic's greateft and moft irreparable lofs was that of Keith himfelf, who, after having rallied the foldiers, and performed for more than three hours all the functions of a confummate General, fell in the church-yard of the village, mortally wounded.

Marfhal Keith was born in Scotland, of a very ancient and noble family, which, unhappily, from principles of generous, but miftaken attachment to the exiled houfe of Stuart, engaged in the rebellion of 1715, againft George the Firft. Obliged to quit his native country, he entered into the fervice of Ruffia, where he

rose to the rank of Field-Marshal; and afterwards passed into that of Frederic the Second. By him, who knew how to appreciate, and to value merit, Keith was not less beloved than respected. All his exertions to wrest the victory from Daun at Hohkirchen, were unsuccessful. His body, after he fell, stripped and naked, was carried into the church of the village, and laid upon a barrow, covered with a Croat's cloak. When all resistance on the part of the Prussians was completely at an end, and their army dispersed; Marshal Daun, accompanied by Lacy and several other officers entered the church. Seeing a dead body exposed on a barrow, and conceiving it to be some person of distinction, he enquired who it was? Lacy approached the corpse, and after attentively regarding it, exclaimed with great emotion, "Alas! 'tis my father's best friend, 'tis Keith!" The late Marshal Lacy and he had both been in the service of Russia, had made more than one campaign together, under

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the reign of the Empreſs Anne, and had lived on terms of intimate friendſhip. At ſo melancholy a piece of intelligence, Daun burſt into tears, as did Lacy, and every perſon preſent. How affecting a moment; and how ſublime, as well as touching a ſubject, for the pencil of an artiſt!

While they were paying this tribute of reſpect and ſympathy to the remains of Keith, a Croat made his appearance, dreſſed in the Marſhal's uniform, and having acroſs his breaſt the yellow riband of the Pruſſian order of the "Black Eagle." Daun demanding of him how he came by thoſe ſpoils, "I took them," anſwered the Croat, "from the man who lies yonder, whom I killed and ſtripped. I have given him in return my cloak." The corpſe was ſcarcely in the leaſt disfigured, or bloody; nor was it without ſome difficulty, and after conſiderable ſearch, that the wound which he had received, was diſcoverable. A muſket-ball had penetrated his

his ſide or flank, but the orifice was hardly perceptible, and only marked by a ſmall purple ſpot. As he fell on his back, he had bled inwardly.

Daun having inſtantly ordered out three regiments under arms, cauſed him to be interred with all the military honours due to his high rank and his diſtinguiſhed merit. On the enſuing day the Marſhal received a letter from his Pruſſian Majeſty, brought by a trumpet. Frederic, after congratulating him on his late victory, and complimenting him on the manœuvres which had conduced to ſo ſignal a ſucceſs, requeſted him to render every military honor to the remains of the great man, whom it had been his misfortune to loſe. The Auſtrian commander in his reply beſought the King to believe, that he had not waited for his royal commands on ſuch a point; but had already paid to the deceaſed Marſhal every mark of reſpect in his power. Frederic, in his letter to Daun, made no mention whatever of Prince Francis of Brunſwic,

Brunſwic, his own brother-in-law, who had fallen in the ſame action. Sir Robert Keith, (now envoy at Vienna, and ſo well known by his ſpirited conduct in Denmark during the revolution in 1772,) has lately erected in the church of Hohkirchen, an elegant marble monument to the memory of his relation, Marſhal Keith. Every particular relative to his death, here enumerated, was imparted to me by an Auſtrian officer of diſtinction who was preſent at Hohkirchen.

If the King cannot be exempted from cenſure for perſiſting, in contradiction to Keith's advice, to occupy the camp at Hohkirchen, he is not leſs to be admired for the celerity and ſkill with which he repaired his defeat. Far from reconquering Sileſia, or even expelling him from Saxony, Daun found him equally formidable as before the late misfortune. When he attempted to beſiege Neiſs, and afterwards to attack Dreſden, Frederic obliged him to renounce both enterprizes, and finally to

fall

fall back upon Bohemia. The army of the Empire, which nearly at the fame time made a feeble effort to regain their honour loft at Rofbach, was eafily repulfed: while the Swedes, who only half a century before had triumphantly overrun Poland, Ruffia, and Saxony, under Charles the Twelfth, were compelled to retire precipitately from Pomerania. If the campaign of 1758 had been more difaftrous to Frederic than the preceding one, it had likewife manifefted in a confpicuous manner his prodigious refources. The next year was deftined to put him to ftill feverer trials.

Daun no longer engaged in 1759, the principal attention of the King. Content with watching his motions, with covering Silefia, and defending Saxony, Frederic directed his moft active exertions againft another enemy. The Ruffians, led by Soltikoff, who had replaced their former commander; after defeating General Wedel at Zullichau, near Croffen on the Oder, had continued their march toward Berlin.

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It was marked by ravages of every kind; and the King, irritated to a pitch of desperation at the defeat of Wedel, resolved to give them once more battle. The Oder, which had been twice the scene of these conflicts, witnessed a third engagement not less sanguinary, and still more memorable from its termination. All the preceding disasters which Frederic had experienced, were light in comparison with the defeat that he sustained at Cunersdorf.

Apprehensive from the motions of the Prussian army, that the King meditated an attack on Soltikoff, Marshal Daun detached Laudohn to join him, at the head of twelve thousand Austrians and Saxons, principally cavalry. The junction was effected, not without difficulty, a very few days before the engagement. On the afternoon immediately preceding it, Soltikoff and Laudohn rode out together, in order to reconnoitre the enemy. As it was evident that the King meant to bring on a battle, Soltikoff took occasion to

explain

explain to his colleague, the diſpoſitions which he intended to make for receiving the Pruſſians. He pointed out at the ſame time the poſition in which he ſhould wait for the attack, and the point againſt which, as he conceived, it would be principally directed. Laudohn, though he coincided with him in opinion, enquired nevertheleſs, what meaſures he had taken for covering or ſecuring his retreat, in caſe of a diſaſter? "None whatever," replied Soltikoff; "the Ruſſians are unacquainted with retreats: they always either conquer or die."

On the following morning, the twelfth of Auguſt, Frederic attacked the entrenched camp at Cunerſdorf; his greateſt efforts being directed againſt their flank, at the only point where it was acceſſible, by a narrow opening through a moraſs. Two Ruſſian regiments ſtationed in the paſs, long ſuſtained without giving way, the onſet of the Pruſſian army: they were at length put to the ſword, and fell in their

their ranks. Soltikoff propofed therefore to Laudohn, that a regiment of Auftrians fhould march into the vacant fpace, along fide of a regiment of his own troops. But the Auftrian foldiers rejected the propofal with indignation. "We are ready to fight," cried they; "but not to be butchered like victims." Neither reproaches nor entreaties could alter their determination; and they were even fo exafperated againft Laudohn, that they threatened to tear him in pieces. In order to avoid their fury, he was obliged to conceal himfelf for a fhort time among the baggage, till their firft emotions of refentment had fubfided.

In this fituation, unfupported by his Auftrian allies, Soltikoff inftantly ordered two regiments of his own troops to advance, with drums beating and colours flying. Like their predeceffors they were cut to pieces; and were fucceeded by two more, who underwent a fimilar fate. Scarcely a man remained alive; but, their bodies

bodies ſoon formed a ſtupendous mound, completely filling the ſpace through which alone the enemy could penetrate. Of the ſeventh and eighth regiments, which in turn occupied the ſame ſpot, ſo few eſcaped, that the gentleman who related theſe particulars, aſſured me, an officer of the name of Richter, though only an enſign in the morning, commanded the ſurvivors at the cloſe of the day.

Such troops, though they might be put to the ſword, it ſeemed impoſſible to vanquiſh. The Pruſſians, wearied with ſlaughter, and ſinking under the heat of the weather, which was intolerable, began, after ſome hours, to relax in their ardour. Inſtead of reſting ſatisfied with the important advantage which he had cheaply gained, and waiting for a more favourable occaſion to complete the deſtruction of his enemies; Frederic, in oppoſition to all advice, forced his ſoldiers to new exertions. Laudohn perceiving their exhauſted condition,

dition, and inſtantly availing himſelf of it, made a deſperate charge at the head of the Auſtrian cavalry, which decided the fortune of the day. The Pruſſians fled on every ſide, threw down their arms, and abandoned the field. Tents, artillery, baggage, every thing fell into the hands of the conqueror. Scarcely could ten men be collected together in a body. Frederic, obliged to conſult his ſafety by flight, paſſed the night in a hut, only a few miles from the ſcene of his defeat, deſtitute of protection, and almoſt without neceſſaries. Laudohn, after expreſſing to the Ruſſian General his admiration of the valour and ſteadineſs of his troops, offered, if Soltikoff would entruſt a few of them to his command, to go in purſuit of the beaten enemy, he even ventured to anſwer for bringing his Pruſſian Majeſty priſoner into the camp within three days. Far from accepting the offer, Soltikoff coldly declined it. "I have already gained two battles," ſaid he,

he, "in little more than a fortnight; let "my brother Daun now do ſomething in "the common cauſe."

Inſtead of being overwhelmed by ſo great a diſaſter, as might have been naturally expected, Frederic ſoon revived more formidable from his defeat. The inaction of the Ruſſians happily allowed him time to aſſemble a new army; and Soltikoff neither followed up his victory at Cunerſdorf, nor atchieved any thing of conſequence during the reſt of the campaign. But Dreſden, which the Pruſſians had hitherto held, was wreſted from them by Daun; and as if ſomething ſiniſter preſided in the councils of their Sovereign, he underwent ſoon afterwards a humiliation ſtill more poignant than the calamity of Cunerſdorf: I mean the ſurrender of near twenty-thouſand troops at Maxen; an event which may almoſt be compared with the diſgrace of the Caudine Forks, ſo memorable in the hiſtory of Rome. Ever diſpoſed from his turn of mind and character, to act offenſively, the King ventured to detach a body of forces, in order to cut off Daun's com-

munication with Bohemia. They were commanded to take poſt at Maxen; a poſition capable of being defended againſt ſuperior numbers, and from its ſituation admirably calculated to intercept the retreat of the Auſtrians. Finck, a General of experience and merit, was ſelected for this commiſſion; in the execution of which, he did not, however, by any means anſwer the expectations of his maſter.

I have heard the conduct of Finck diſcuſſed by many Auſtrian officers who were preſent at his ſurrender; and they in general agree, that he not only took a bad poſition, but that he defended it ſtill worſe. By leaving the heights above his camp unoccupied, he committed an irreparable fault, which enabled Daun, after firſt ſurrounding, ultimately to compel him to lay down his arms. Always ſlow, and frequently irreſolute, Daun heſitated nevertheleſs, whether he ſhould make the attempt; but the exhortations of Lacy prevailed over his indeciſion. Finck, inveſted on every ſide by the Auſtrians, found eſcape impoſſible;

and

and Lacy, after having made himſelf maſter of the heights which commanded the Pruſſian camp, ſummoned their commander to ſurrender. He was not in want of proviſions; and General Wunſch, as well as many other officers, indignant at the idea of ſubmitting to an ignominious capitulation, propoſed either to cut their paſſage through the enemy, or to periſh to the laſt man ſword in hand. Finck, though he rejected the propoſal, yet did not ſurrender till he had vainly made every effort to liberate himſelf and his unfortunate army. While the articles were framing, Wunſch attempted to force his way at the head of two regiments of cavalry. But, on the menace of the Auſtrians to put the remaining troops to the ſword, and at Finck's expreſs command, he reluctantly returned to the camp. Seventeen thouſand of Frederic's veteran ſoldiers piled up their arms. Lacy rode in among them, after having concluded the capitulation, and made regiment after regiment priſoners of war.

The King was more deeply ſenſible to this diſgraceful and unexpected blow, than he had been to all his preceding defeats. In the violence of his reſentment, he refuſed to admit Finck to his preſence, or even to hear his juſtification. That officer, who ſoon afterwards entered into the Daniſh ſervice, is ſince dead at Copenhagen. I ought however to add, that many perſons here at Berlin, who are well able to appreciate the conduct of Finck, declare that he was far leſs culpable than unfortunate. They aſſert that he originally remonſtrated againſt the meaſure of taking poſt at Maxen, and only did it in compliance with his maſter's peremptory orders. Under this dark cloud terminated the campaign of 1759, rendered for ever memorable by the reverſes of Cunerſdorf and of Maxen. Saxony was likewiſe wreſted from Frederic, which had hitherto ſerved as a barrier to his own dominions; while his enemies, elated by ſucceſs, promiſed themſelves to effect his entire deſtruction in the courſe of the enſuing year.

Neither

Neither Daun nor Soltikoff form the moſt conſpicuous figures in the campaign of 1760. On the contrary, they ſink into comparative obſcurity; while Laudohn, who had ſo lately diſtinguiſhed himſelf at Cunerſdorf, by the ſuperiority of his views, added to the deciſion and rapidity of his movements, continued to inflict the moſt ſevere and humiliating wounds on the Pruſſian Monarchy. Fouquet, another General of Frederic's, renewed in ſome meaſure at Landſhut, the ignominious capitulation of Finch at Maxen He made indeed a more vigorous defence; but, the termination was ſcarcely leſs diſhonourable, and equally calamitous. Of twenty-one thouſand men whom he commanded, not above ſix thouſand eſcaped the ſword or a priſon; and Fouquet himſelf was among the number of the captives. Two ſuch diſaſters following each other at ſo ſhort an interval, ſullied no leſs the luſtre of the Pruſſian arms, than they elevated the courage of their opponents. Glatz, one of the keys of Sileſia, for which Laudohn

and Fouquet had contended, fell to the former.

That province, to recover which was always a favorite object of Maria Theresa, became once more the principal theatre of military operations, where Frederic maintained a desperate and unequal conflict against superior forces. On every side he appeared to be precluded not only from assistance, but even from escape. The Austrian and Russian Generals having enclosed him, anticipated his fall or his surrender. They already meditated to surprise him in his camp, and to renew the affair at Hohkirchen. But, the genius of Frederic, matured by experience and misfortune, sustained, and his celerity extricated him in this emergency. Without allowing his enemies time to complete their measures, he marched to meet the danger; and selecting Laudohn as being the most exposed from his situation, he attacked that General at Lignitz on the 15th of August. After a desperate resistance the King obtained a victory so much the more gratifying, as it was gained over a commander whose name,

and ſucceſſes had depreſſed the Pruſſians. It has been commonly aſſerted that Lacy, who commanded a ſeparate body of troops, and who was ſtationed in the vicinity, might have advanced in time to Laudohn's relief; but, that actuated by a ſpirit of rivalſhip or jealouſy, he withheld his aſſiſtance. So unfounded as well as unjuſt an aſperſion, is beſt confuted by Lacy's whole life and character. Far from ſuſtaining any diminution of fame, Laudohn roſe more brilliant from his defeat, and glorioufly repaired the diſtaſter of Lignitz before the cloſe of the war.

Under the ordinary circumſtances of contending nations, where the reſpective force of the combatants had been in any meaſure balanced, Frederic's late victory would have given him a decided ſuperiority over his opponents during the remainder of the campaign. But, ſo immenſe was the diſparity of numbers and ſtrength, that no common exertions ſeemed able long to protract his total ruin. Berlin and Potzdam were laid under contribution by the Ruſſians; Laudohn, notwithſtanding his defeat, ſtill maintained him-

 ſelf

felf in the midft of Silefia, while Daun and Lacy were mafters of Saxony and Lufatia. It was not enough for Frederic to have forced Soltikoff to abandon Brandenburgh, and ultimately to evacuate the other parts of his dominions. Some great and decifive victory was become neceffary, in order to enable him again to take up his winter-quarters in Saxony. Rendered almoft defperate by his fituation, and regardlefs of obftacles, Frederic refolved therefore to attack the Auftrians, though they occupied a pofition along the Elbe, equally ftrong and advantageous. Such were the circumftances in which took place the memorable battle of Torgau, on the third of November.

In no action of the whole war, not even at Colin, did the King commit fo much to fortune; fince the confequences of defeat to him were incalculable. Animated by a fenfe of the neceffity of conquering, he forgot every perfonal confideration, and expofed himfelf to the fevereft fire, while he rallied and led his cavalry again and again to the charge. But fuch were the impediments, natural and artificial,

artificial, with which his infantry had to contend, that though they displayed the steadiest courage, they never could open and form in face of the Austrian batteries. Towards evening, notwithstanding the pertinacious efforts of the King to tear the victory from Daun, he not only maintained his ground, but had repulsed the Prussians. Eighteen thousand of their best troops were left on the field, and scarcely two thirds of that number had fallen on the other side. Frederic, unable to renew the contest with any prospect of success, must have fallen back upon Brandenburgh; and Daun had already dispatched a courier, to announce to the Empress Queen the intelligence of a decisive victory, when an unexpected and fortuitous event completely changed the fortune of the day.

Some Prussian soldiers having accidentally discovered that the heights of Siplitz, which commanded the Austrian camp, were unguarded, carried the intelligence to their officer. After ascertaining the fact, he reported it to General Ziethen; who, equally astonished and delighted at the information,

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caused several pieces of cannon to be immediately transported thither, and occupied the post with a detachment of troops. The darkness of the night favoured and facilitated his operations. At daybreak so tremenduous a cannonade opened on the forces of Daun, that he was compelled to break up his camp, and to retire in the utmost confusion, harrassed and pursued by the Prussians. A second courrier was sent off to Vienna, to communicate to Maria Theresa the disastrous reverse which had taken place. Lacy alone, of all the Imperial Generals, retreated in admirable order at the head of the division which he commanded, along the left bank of the Elbe. In sight of the victorious army, on the same side of the river, he made good his retreat for several leagues. Then crossing the Elbe at the town of Meissen, he gained the opposite heights, and checked the further progress of the enemy. It is universally admitted that this manœuvre may rank with the finest of the present age. But all the advantages of victory remained not less to Frederic.

Frederic. Laudohn, reluctantly compelled to quit Silesia, once more abandoned that Dutchy; while the Prussians, favoured by their late success, took up their winter-quarters again in Saxony.

The campaign of 1761, unlike all the preceding, is sterile in great events, no general action having been fought anywhere from its commencement to its close. Enfeebled by their past exertions, and rendered mutually cautious by the reverses of fortune which they had in turn experienced, neither party seemed inclined to risk an engagement. But, it began to be apparent that the King must ultimately sink under such an unequal struggle, which neither subsidies, nor ability however consummate, nor military skill could much longer portract. At no period of the war does he, indeed, justly excite so much admiration. Five campaigns had deprived him of his most able Generals, and left him little other resource than in the unshaken firmness of his own character. A Prince of meaner capacity must have inevitably fallen under the weight of his

enemies and his encreafing embarraffments. Frederic, by judicioufly protracting the final iffue, effected his extrication. Inftead of acting offenfively and committing all to hazard, as he had done more than once in the preceding campaigns; he feems to have exchanged qualities with his antagonift, and to have adopted the phlegm as well as the caution of Daun. This verfatility, which is not the leaft wonderful feature of his character, proved the prefervation of Silefia, and of the Pruffian Monarchy. Both muft have been loft by a falfe ftep, or by an act of imprudence.

On the other hand, the Court of Vienna and the commanders of the Auftrian forces, by not adopting the moft vigorous meafures at this period of the war, were guilty of an unpardonable error. They could not be ignorant that their ally the Emprefs of Ruffia was in a very precarious ftate of health; they knew that her death would at leaft diffolve the union between the two Crowns; and that the acceffion of the Great Duke her nephew would convert the Ruffians into open enemies. Under fuch circum-

circumſtances, it ſeems obvious that Daun ſhould have forced the King to an action, let the obſtacles have been ever ſo great, or the chances ever ſo unequal; ſince a ſingle victory over him would have terminated the conteſt. But, though Maria Thereſa's forces were joined by the Ruſſians not far from Breſlaw; ſo ably and advantageouſly did Frederic chuſe his poſition, that Daun never ventured to attack him in his camp near Schweidnitz. While his brother Prince Henry, with inferior forces defended Saxony and Brandenburgh; the King baffled all the efforts of Daun to bring on a general engagement, and finally compelled his Muſcovite allies to retire into Poland, without effecting any material object in favour of the common cauſe. If Laudohn had not partly ſupplied Daun's inactivity, the campaign of 1761 would preſent a blank completely deſtitute of events: but, neither Frederic's activity nor his vigilence however unremitted; could prevent that able General, the ſcourge of Pruſſia, from at once forming and executing an enterprize, in which we are at a loſs whether to admire

admire moſt his audacity, his rapidity, or his ſucceſs. Schweidnitz, the moſt important fortreſs in all Sileſia, defended by a numerous garriſon, and commanded by a general officer of approved capacity, fell into the hands of the Auſtrians. Laudohn having unexpectedly marched with the velocity of lightning to attack it on the firſt of October, inſtantly planted his ladders againſt the walls; and deſpiſing the ordinary forms of a ſiege, carried it by ſtorm, at the point of the bayonet, in three hours.

So unexpected a diſaſter ſeemed to preſage the approaching fall of the King himſelf, which every thing announced to be imminent and almoſt inevitable. Charles the Twelfth's ſituation after his defeat at Pultowa, was hardly more deſperate than that of Frederic, towards the cloſe of 1761. Another campaign, according to all appearances, muſt have laid him entirely at the mercy of the vaſt combination which had determined his deſtruction. Maria Thereſa, miſtreſs of Schweidnitz and of Glatz, already anticipated the reſtoration of all Sileſia; while the various Princes and States of Germany, whom

Frederic

Frederic had either injured or attacked, impatiently waited for the accomplishment of their respective expectations, in the division of his dominions. Such was the critical and almost hopeless condition of his affairs, when the death of Elizabeth, Empress of Russia, took place.

That Princess, Frederic's implacable enemy, expired at Petersburgh, of a distemper accelerated by her intemperance, on the fifth of January, 1762. Her nephew and successor, Peter the Third, who had secretly laboured during several years to impede the progress of the Russian armies, instantly manifested without disguise, the violent predilection that he had long nourished for his Prussian Majesty; a partiality which rose to adoration. Not content with separating his forces from those of Maria Theresa, he acted as her avowed enemy, and as the auxiliary of Frederic. His reign was indeed short, and its termination tragical: But, the great principle of political connection between Muscovy and Austria, which had subsisted under Elizabeth, was not the less dissolved. Catherine the Second, who succeeded Peter, though she

ſhe by no means adopted the intemperate zeal of her huſband in favour of Pruſſia, was too wiſe as well as too magnanimous, to reſume the perſonal animoſities of Elizabeth. She withdrew her troops altogether from the conteſt, almoſt as ſoon as ſhe aſcended the throne. Sweden, wearied with a war in which ſhe had loſt her military reputation, without reaping the ſmalleſt augmentation of territory, had previouſly concluded a ſeperate peace with the Court of Berlin.

Thus liberated from two of his numerous opponents, the King in 1762 became ſuperior to Daun in the field; more however, as it would ſeem, by the energy of his character, and the ſyſtematic caution of the Imperial General, than from any other circumſtance. In face of the Auſtrian army, Frederic even ventured to lay regular ſiege to Schweidnitz; which, after a long and gallant defence, protracted to the laſt extremity, ſurrendered, notwithſtanding every effort made for its relief. With the battle of Freyberg, terminated the Seventh and laſt campaign of this long and ſanguinary war;

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an action in which neither the King, nor Daun, nor Laudohn, had any ſhare. The honour of the day was excluſively reſerved for Prince Henry of Pruſſia, to whom his brother conſtantly intruſted the arduous taſk of repelling the enemy on the Saxon frontier. Having attacked the combined forces of Auſtria and the Empire, on the 29th of October, he obtained a brilliant victory. Frederic, who, juſtly alarmed for his ſafety, was in full march to his aſſiſtance did not arrive till the day after the engagement Thoſe perſons who ſee his character and actions through an unfavorable medium, aſſert that he has never forgiven Prince Henry for having ſo gloriouſly cloſed the war, without waiting to admit a participator in his ſucceſs.

The Pruſſian troops, elevated by their advantages, once more re-entered Bohemia, from which they had been ſo long expelled; while detached parties ravaged the circle of Franconia, ranſomed the city of Nuremberg, and ſpread conſternation over every part of the German empire. In this ſitua-

tion, Maria Therefa, abandoned by Ruffia and by Sweden, deriving little or no affiftance from France, and unable to extend protection to her own dominions, was neceffitated to have recourfe to negotiation. After feven campaigns, and after fuftaining the rudeft fhocks of adverfe fortune, Frederic was ftill not only capable of refiftance, but in a ftate to act every where offenfively. Of all their conquefts, Glatz alone, together with a portion of the Dutchy of Cleves remained in poffeffion of the Auftrians. It was requifite to facrifice them, in order to induce the enemy to evacuate Saxony, which unfortunate country had feverely fuffered for the political connections of its Sovereign, and his fteady adherence to the Houfe of Auftria. Thefe confiderations imperioufly dictated the peace of Hubertfburgh, which reftored tranquillity to the north of Europe in the beginning of 1763. Silefia, the principal object of conteft, remained entire to the Pruffian monarchy; and fcarcely a foot of territory was loft or gained on either fide by a war, which had not only caufed fo vaft an

effuſion of blood, but which threatened more than once the ſubverſion of the preſent political ſyſtem of Europe.

When we conſider the long reſiſtance made by a Prince ſo inferior in political ſtrength to his antagoniſts; when we appreciate his military efforts, and compare them with his apparent reſources, we cannot juſtly refuſe to him our higheſt admiration. He is not merely great when crowned with ſucceſs. His reverſes and defeats, his errors and misfortunes, contribute to elevate him in our opinion. We follow him with eagerneſs, as well as anxiety, through all the tranſitions of war; and we ſee him with exultation emerge again into daylight from his complicated diſtreſs. His fortitude, under circumſtances of almoſt unparalleled depreſſion, excites aſtoniſhment blended with reſpect. Charles the Twelfth was little more than a ſucceſsful madman, deſtitute of ſyſtem, impelled by blind animoſity, and incapable of repairing his faults. After elevating his country to a tranſitory point of political greatneſs in the ſcale of Europe, he pre-

cipitated the Swedes into lafting poverty and oblivion. But Frederic knows how to preferve, as well as how to conquer. During a war of fuch duration, marked in many of its ftages by unprecedented calamities, he neither impoverifhed, nor even greatly depopulated his dominions. They are now admitted to be more flourifhing and better cultivated, than at any period fince his acceffion. It is true that his policy is not always the moft upright, beneficent, or confonant to the dictates of humanity. And however neceffity, which has been juftly termed the plea of tyrants, may fometimes feem to acquit him; it is an acquittal with which Princes fuch as Trajan would not be fatisfied.

His treatment of the Saxons during the late war, fcarcely admits of any juftification, and will, I truft, have no imitators. I do not merely allude to the fact of his immuring the principal inhabitants of Drefden in a public building, where they were detained till they had raifed a heavy contribution, and had afterwards drawn bills on their correfpond-

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ents in various parts of Europe. Nor do I consider his causing the suburbs of that beautiful city to be destroyed, in order to secure it against the approach of the Austrians; as meriting any severe condemnation. These acts, however harsh, may be in a great measure justified by military necessity. But, there are others imputable to Frederic, over which no casuistry can throw a gloss. Whatever might have been done by Attila or by Genseric. Neither the laws of nations, nor those of modern war, allow of transporting the male and female manufacturers of a conquered state, into the dominions of the invader. This infraction of natural justice was nevertheless committed at Meissen in Saxony; a place famous for the fabric of porcelain, so generally admired under the name of Dresden China. All the best artists, forcibly sent to Berlin, were there compelled, during life, to continue their labours, and to exert their talents, for the profit of a Sovereign, the inveterate enemy of their country. They, and their descendants, or their scholars, who are still here, have be-

come the involuntary denizens of another ſoil, the ſubjects of Frederic the Second.

Hundreds of Saxon young women, carried off by violence from their paternal cottages, were ſent into the remoteſt provinces of the Pruſſian Monarchy, and there matched with huſbands provided for them by the State. The rape of the Sabines in antiquity, ſeems to be the beſt precedent for ſuch treatment. In compliance with the ſame ſyſtem of policy, numbers of the Saxon youth, either taken in arms, or dragged from the domeſtic occupations of huſbandry, were obliged to enter into the Pruſſian ſervice, and to carry deſtruction into the boſom of their native country. The Romans, it is true, in the decline of the empire, incorporated into their legions the Barbarian youth of the Rhine and the Danube. But, they never forced the Parthians, or the Huns taken in battle, to bear arms againſt their own Sovereign, inſtead of fighting for his cauſe. Such an experiment might even be accounted dangerous under a variety of aſpects; but, Frederic poſ-

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feſſes the ſecret of directing and regulating a machine, which in common hands would probably be fatal to its inventor. His army unlike the military force of other Princes, is compoſed in peace as well as in war, of many diſcordant and heterogeneous materials. Every European State, from Spain to Ruſſia incluſive, may be ſaid to contribute towards its formation. Poland, Germany, Holland, Denmark, but above all, France furniſh him with recruits. The French alone in his ſervice may be always eſtimated at five-and-twenty thouſand men.

Neither that patriotic ſentiment which we denominate the love of our country, nor even the principle of loyalty to the Sovereign, conſtitute indeed, here the general baſis of military diſcipline and adherence. Frederic contents himſelf with ſubſtituting in their place other motives of action, leſs voluntary and leſs honourable, but equally efficacious. How, in fact, can the native of Gaſcony, of Podolia, or of Suabia, entrapped or ſeduced into a foreign ſervice, and detained in it by force, be animated with

patriotiſm, affection, or even a ſenſe of allegiance? It is enough if he does not deteſt the Prince and the State for whom he draws the trigger, or puſhes the bayonet. Aware of this original defect in the conſtitution of his military force, the King has recourſe to other modes of maintaining and recruiting his army. Never, perhaps, did human ability, inveſted with unlimited power, exert ſo much ingenuity in detaining its captives; for, in that light, the far greater part of the foreign troops muſt be conſidered. This city, as well as Potzdam, is deſtitute of fortifications; but, both are ſurrounded with a ſtrong wall, or ſtoccade, one of the principal objects of which is to prevent deſertion. With a view to increaſe the difficulties attending it, all the ſentinels on guard are commonly placed either two together, or at ſo ſmall a diſtance from each other, as to render it impracticable to deſert without being perceived. The line of ſentinels being double, one without the other; and the ſoldiers being called over every two hours; it ſeems nearly impoſſible to get, undiſcovered,

to any confiderable diftance. If, however, by good fortune or by fpeed, they fhould effect it, guns are inftantly fired, to fpread the alarm throughout the country. The peafants, on hearing the fignal, are obliged to rife, in order to fecure the unfortunate fugitive; and they are even perfonally interefted in his recapture, as they muft furnifh a fubftitute in the place of any foldier who efcapes. Yet, in defiance of thefe, and fimilar precautions, fuch are the attractions of freedom, and the impatience of bondage, that every night attempts are made to defert. The frontiers of Saxony are fo near, that they may be reached from Potzdam in the fpace of three or four hours.

The prodigious proportion of foreigners in the fervice of Frederic, renders it matter of calculation at the commencement of a war, whether one or two campaigns may not be principally fupported at their expence, with a comparatively flender facrifice of native Pruffians. By thus fparing the blood of his own fubjects, and referving them for fubfequent emergencies, the King is

is enabled to ſuſtain the firſt ſhock of hoſtilities, without materially affecting the internal induſtry, cultivation, or population of his dominions. This is nevertheleſs a dangerous inſtrument, which may recoil upon its Inventor, unleſs ſuperintended with equal vigilance and dexterity. The bayonet is generally admitted to be a weapon more formidable than the muſket: but, if it is to be feared that the ſoldier wants adherence to the Prince for whom he fights, its very advantages become matter of apprehenſion. Whole platoons, when once mingled pell-mell with the enemy, may throw down their arms, or deſert to the oppoſite ſide: a circumſtance wholly impoſſible to take place, while the fire is kept up at a diſtance between two adverſe bodies of troops. This is a delicate point on which to explain myſelf too clearly; but it is thoroughly underſtood here, by every man acquainted with the formation of the Pruſſian army.

The Jews, who ever ſince the time of Adrian, have always manifeſted the moſt decided inaptitude and antipathy to war, have

nevertheleſs

neverthelefs attracted the attention of Frederic, as capable of being made fubfervient to the general protection or defence. After the partition of Poland, five years ago, finding that there was a very confiderable proportion of them refident in the tract of territory which fell to his fhare, he determined to embody them, and to inftruct them in the fcience of arms. They vainly remonftrated to His Majefty, that war was neither analogous to their national genius, nor agreeable to their private feelings. A corps of feveral thoufand was formed, compelled to learn the manual exercife, and paffed in review. But, fuch was found to be on trial, their infurmountable difinclination to bear arms, that after many vain endeavours, they were finally broken and difbanded. The abhorrence of the peafants towards them being fo violent, that it was apprehended the Jews might be maffacred or pillaged, in paffing through the villages, to regain their refpective homes; an efcort of Cavalry was therefore ordered to conduct them in fafety back to their abodes. I believe it is the

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only attempt of the kind, which has been yet made in our times, to bring Jews into the field; and having wholly failed in ſuch able hands, we may conjecture that it will not be ſpeedily repeated by other Princes or States.

No Sovereign, ancient or modern, has ever better known how to awaken, and to animate in his cauſe, the vanity as well as the pride of the ſoldier. In all his writings, in all his addreſſes to them, he calls them by the endearing epithets of "Mes cavaliers, mes enfans, mes camarades." Theſe appellations, though they mean nothing in effect, yet produce a powerful ſenſation on the human mind, and tend to make ſome amends for the want of more ſolid benefits or remunerations. There is, in fact, I believe, no eſtabliſhment in the Pruſſian dominions, preciſely reſembling thoſe of Chelſea, or of Greenwich among us, to which the invalided or the wounded ſoldier may retire, after having paſſed his life in the active ſervice of the State. The veteran muſt depend, in a great meaſure, on the King's ability, inclination,

nation, and opportunity of providing for him, when he can no longer carry arms. His Majeſty's revenues, perhaps, are not ſufficiently ample to enable him however ardently he may wiſh it, to furniſh adequate funds for age and infirmity, in every inſtance. Detraction has indeed accuſed him of not deſiring to maintain any troops, except ſuch as are capable of appearing in the field: but, I believe the inſinuation to be no leſs malignant, than it is void of foundation. Frederic underſtands too well his real intereſt, ever to treat with cruelty or inſenſibility the ſupporters of his own greatneſs, the inſtruments and companions of his victories.

Fifteen years have now nearly elapſed ſince the concluſion of the peace of Hubertſburg; and it is matter of curious ſpeculation, whether in caſe of a new rupture, the Pruſſian troops will maintain the aſcendancy over thoſe of Auſtria, which, all circumſtances conſidered, they had inconteſtably acquired during the courſe of the laſt war. This is however, a queſtion not likely to be ſpeedily reſolved, as appearances ſeem

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to indicate a long continuance of the calm enjoyed by Germany. Silefia, to the refumption of which the Court of Vienna formerly looked with ceafelefs anxiety, is now confirmed to Pruffia by time and long prefcription. The King, who begins to feel the preffure of age, muft neceffarily wifh rather to fecure, than to augment, the grandeur of his houfe. Content with having erected fo vaft a fabrick, his ambition will probably be fatisfied with devolving it entire to his fucceffor.

LETTER IV.

Review of the Pruſſian Hiſtory, previous to the Acceſſion of Frederic the Second—Marriage of that Prince.—Queen of Pruſſia.—Character and Death of William Auguſtus, the late Prince Royal.—His Diſpoſition and Qualities.—Severity exerciſed towards him by the King.—Princeſs Royal.—Character, and Expectations formed of Frederic William.—Prince Henry of Pruſſia.—His Talents and Services.—Princeſs Amelia.—Prince Ferdinand of Pruſſia.

BERLIN, *November 2d,* 1777.

EIGHTY years have not yet elapſed ſince the period when this powerful Monarchy, which now occupies ſo diſtinguiſhed a rank among the States of Europe, was only a German Electorate, whoſe Sovereign was Duke of Pruſſia. It would however be unjuſt to attribute to the talents, or even to the victories of the preſent King excluſively, ſo extraordinary and rapid an aggrandizement. The Pruſſian greatneſs is the work of four ſucceſſive Princes,

Princes, who, in the ſpace of near a hundred and forty years, availing themſelves of a variety of circumſtances, have elevated their houſe to its actual ſtate. Frederic William, commonly denominated in hiſtory, "the Great Elector," laid the foundations by his wiſdom, valor, and policy. In the courſe of near half a century, his able adminiſtration repaired the calamities of the preceding reign; emancipated the Dukedom of Pruſſia from its feudal homage to the Crown and Republic of Poland; introduced arts, manufactures, and civilization among his ſubjects; and rendered the Electors of Brandenburgh the moſt powerful Princes of the North, under the rank of crowned heads. When theſe facts are conſidered, one cannot be ſurpriſed at the eulogiums conferred on him by his preſent Majeſty, in his writings; nor at the popular veneration with which his name and actions are always mentioned in this country.

The vanity of the ſon continued and embelliſhed the fabrick, raiſed by the talents of the father. Oſtentation, rather

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than a wife and enlarged ambition, probably ftimulated Frederic the Firft to procure the exchange of his electoral bonnet for a royal crown: but, it may be juftly doubted, whether the deepeft and moft fuccefsful policy could have eventually contributed fo much to the elevation of his family. Whatever degree of contempt has been thrown on his character by the prefent King his grandfon, he has always appeared to me to have juftly challenged the gratitude of his pofterity. His perfonal deformity, his love of expenfive fhew, and his puerile attachment to favourites, are all expofed with feverity, in the "Memoirs of the Houfe of Brandenburgh." If, however, we confult other fources of information, we fhall fee him depictured as magnificent, liberal, and humane. It is thus that Pollnitz has defcribed him; and it is in thefe colors that I have heard him mentioned by perfons here, whofe fathers occupied diftinguifhed places in his Court.

To Frederic the Firft fucceeded his fon, Frederic William, the moft harfh and un-

amiable of Princes, whose principal felicity seemed to consist in forming and disciplining a giant regiment of guards, the wonder of his own people, and the ridicule of foreign nations. Parsimonious in every other artiticle of pleasure, and an enemy to all expence, he retained about him no trace of his father's splendor. Terrible in his anger, inflexible in his prejudices, and inexorable in his resentment, he punished the transgressions of his subjects, and even of his children, with unexampled severity. His successor, the present King, narrowly escaped the fate of Don Carlos in Spain, and of the Czarowitz Alexis in Russia, for a fault which merited only paternal reprehension. To the interposition of the late Emperor Charles the Sixth, whose daughter he since despoiled of Silesia, Frederic was eminently indebted for his pardon and his life. It must be confessed that over this transaction, as well as over many other censurable parts of Frederic William's conduct, his son has thrown the veil of filial piety and decorum, in all his writings; while he avows the indelible

indelible obligations due to his father's economy, his policy, and his attention to promote the profperity of his fubjects.

The private felicity of his fon did not form equally an object of his endeavours; for no fooner had he releafed the Prince Royal from a long and rigorous confinement to which he was fentenced in the Citadel of Cuftrin, than he was compelled by his father to contract a marriage altogether contrary to his inclinations. Frederic William's choice having fallen on the Princefs Elizabeth Chriftina of Brunfwic Wolfenbuttle, the nuptials were folemnized in June 1733; but his parental authority, however rigorous or defpotic, never could enforce the confummation of the marriage. She remains, it is fuppofed, a maiden Queen. At the time of her union with his prefent Majefty, fhe neverthelefs poffeffed perfonal charms of the moft captivating kind, which might well have awakened defire, if not excited attachment. She had not completed her eighteenth year, and to a very fine complexion fhe added a graceful and elegant figure. But, thefe attractions had no influence over

her hufband, who manifefted for her an infurmountable indifference, which he was at little pains to conceal. His difinclination towards the Princefs, was augmented by his contempt of her underftanding. As the match had been on his part from the beginning altogether involuntary, doubts of its legal validity might have been ftarted not without fome reafon. It was even commonly fuppofed throughout Germany, that on Frederic William's death, and his own acceffion to the throne, he would avail himfelf of the pretext of compulfion; either by immediately difowning her as his wife, or by procuring a divorce.

Frederic has not however, manifefted the flighteft difpofition to break the matrimonial fetters impofed on him by the late King, nor has he difcovered any anxiety to tranfmit the Crown to a lineal fucceffor. Whether a fenfe of honor, refpect to the memory of his predeceffor, or other motives of a perfonal nature, difficult and delicate to explain, may have contributed moft to produce his acquiefcence, it is not eafy to fay with certainty. One of his firft acts, w

to acknowledge her publicly as Queen of Pruſſia; but, ſatisfied with that recognition, he went no further. During four-and-forty years which have ſince elapſed, he has uniformly treated her with external reſpect, civility, and coldneſs. In the beginning of his reign, when they frequently appeared together on public occaſions, the Queen, naturally timid, felt herſelf ſo much overawed by the conſciouſneſs of her own inferiority of underſtanding, added to her huſband's neglect; that if by accident he addreſſed his diſcourſe to her at table, ſhe burſt into tears, and was incapable of reply. This conduct, far from exciting any emotion of concern or compaſſion in his boſom, only augmented his diſlike: a ſentiment which derived ſtrength from the compariſon between her and the two Queens of Pruſſia, her immediate predeceſſors, who were both very ſuperior women. Sophia Charlotte, wife of Frederic the Firſt, the friend and correſpondent of Leibnitz, cultivated letters and philoſophy as the beſt companions of

the throne, and the greateſt conſolations of human life. The late Queen enjoyed to the time of her death, when ſhe was more than ſeventy, the affectionate attachment of her family and her ſubjects. Both were Princeſſes of Hanover; one the ſiſter, and the other the daughter of George the Firſt, King of England. Frederic has immortalized the memory of the firſt Queen of Pruſſia, in his writings; and he found leiſure even in the midſt of his greateſt public difficulties, to pay the tribute of filial affection to the virtues of the ſecond. She died only ten days after the memorable defeat at Colin, in June 1757, leaving her ſon and the Pruſſian Monarchy itſelf in the moſt perilous criſis.

The preſent Queen is little known beyond the limits of Berlin, or the palace of Charlottenburg, to which ſhe commonly repairs in ſummer. She enjoys indeed the name and honors of royalty; but, her life is melancholy, uniform, and inſipid. Nor are her appointments adequate to ſuſtaining the repreſentation of a Sovereign, in

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manner becoming her dignity. However limited may be her talents, ſhe merits from her amiable qualities and virtues, the attachment which is univerſally paid to her. Age and knowledge of the world have inſenſibly corrected her natural timidity; but, with her huſband ſhe has ſcarcely any except a nominal connection. Equally a ſtranger to his pains and to his pleaſures, altogether excluded from his confidence or ſociety, ſhe ſees him only in his occaſional viſits to the capital, in common with every other perſon about the Court.

It is no leſs true than incredible, that in the courſe of near half a century, which has elapſed ſince her arrival here, ſhe never has been either at Potzdam, or at "Sans Souci." The mortification of ſuch an excluſion is augmented by the preference ſhewn to all the other Princeſſes of the Royal Family, who have been repeatedly there, at the King's invitation. It is true that ſome years ago, Prince Ferdinand of Brunſwic her brother being arrived

at Berlin, his Majeſty acquainted him by letter, that if he had a wiſh to viſit Potzdam and "Sans Souci," orders were given to ſhew him every thing deſerving his attention. Frederic, who was juſt ſetting out for Sileſia, added, that "the "Queen, if ſhe pleaſed, might accompany "him." But, warmly as ſhe deſired to gratify her curioſity, by the ſight of a place ſo intereſting, ſhe diſdained to accept the permiſſion. "If," ſaid ſhe, "his Majeſty "does not deign to invite me to his palace, "when he is there in perſon, I will not "profit of his abſence to viſit it." In conſequence of her adherence to this determination, her brother went there alone.

The late King Frederic William was carried off by a dropſy, while ſtill in the vigor of his age, leaving behind him a numerous family. His ſecond ſon, William Auguſtus is no more; but, it is in his line that the crown will probably be perpetuated. He was the handſomeſt Prince of the Royal Houſe, of agreeable

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manners, and of an amiable character; though in talents civil as well as military, and in ftrength of mind, he could neither be compared with the King, nor with his younger brother Henry. His father felected for him another Princefs of the family of Brunfwic, Louifa Amelia, fifter to the prefent Queen of Pruffia; but William Auguftus was not diftinguifhed either by his continence before marriage, or by his fidelity to the nuptial bed. Unlike Frederic in that particular he manifefted a decided paffion for the pleafures of love; and his gallantries with women of diftinction, were no lefs public than they were numerous.* Carried off by a premature death, in the midft of the great war that feemed to menace the deftruction of the Pruffian Monarchy, the event of which he is faid to have deprecated; he had not the fatisfaction to witnefs the triumphant manner in which it was terminated. He expired in difgrace, at the age of thirty-fix, fcarcely more than nineteen years ago; and his end is juftly fuppofed to have been accelerated, if not occafioned

occasioned by the poignancy of his own feelings, to which he fell a sacrifice.

After the memorable defeat which his Prussian Majesty sustained at Colin, in June 1757, he was obliged, as we have seen, to retire with precipitation towards the confines of Saxony. In this critical situation, having hastily raised the siege of Prague, he thought proper to divide his forces; entrusting to his brother William Augustus a considerable corps, which was posted in one of the northern circles of Bohemia. Frederic, whose maxim has always been, that an army acting on the defensive in an enemy's country, melts away by desertion and by sickness, more rapidly than by by the sword; enjoined his brother to spare no efforts, in order to impede the progress of the Austrians, who were advancing rapidly into Lusatia. In his instructions he added, that it would be better at all events to lose his soldiers in attacking and harassing Daun, than to suffer them to moulder away in retreating before a vic-

torious General. Whether from want of military ſkill, or as other perſons here aſſert, from inferiority in numbers, and in the quality of the troops under his command; it is certain that the Prince did not execute the commiſſion given him, in a ſatisfactory manner. Daun having paſſed him and got into his rear, entered Luſatia, where he bombarded the town of Zittau. The King inſtantly diſmiſſed William Auguſtus from his ſervice; would liſten to no juſtification or explanations; and when they met, he contemptuouſly turned away his horſe's head from the unfortunate object of his reſentment. On the Prince's attempting to excuſe and to juſtify his conduct, "Si je vous "traitois comme vous meritez," anſwered Frederic with indignation, "je vous ferois "decapiter; et j'enverrois votre tête à tous "les Généraux de mon armêe." He was immediately ordered to retire; and he died in June 1758, about a year afterwards, of the moſt incurable of all maladies, a broken heart, in the prime of life. The King, engaged at that

that time in the arduous enterprize of Olmutz, which demanded all his attention, had ſcarcely leiſure, or perhaps diſpoſition, to regret him. He left one ſon, named Frederic William, who is heir to the Pruſſian Monarchy; beſides a daughter, the preſent Princeſs of Orange. His widow ſtill ſurvives, and reſides at Berlin; but, ſhe is as little diſtinguiſhed by Frederic's notice, as her ſiſter the Queen. They both paſs their lives in obſcurity, and neither the one nor the other will ever occupy a conſpicuous place in the annals of the houſe of Brandenburgh.

Thoſe who, from whatever motive, deſirous of change, eagerly anticipate a new reign; and many of that deſcription are to be found here; contemplate with pleaſure the character as well as qualities of the Prince Royal of Pruſſia. He is juſt thirty-three years of age, full ſix feet in height, and of a vigorous frame of body: in his early youth he was of a thin habit, but he now inclines to corpulency. His countenance, open, gracious, and engaging, indicates more bene-

beneficence of heart, than it expresses superiority of mind. His figure, far exceeding the proportions of ordinary men, may be termed athletic, and almost Herculean. If he were habited in the skin of the Nemæan Lion, he would convey no inadequate idea of the son of Jupiter and Alcmena. Formed for a camp, more than for a drawing-room, he has the frank and martial air of a soldier, rather than the polished manners of a Prince. Of a robust constitution, and inured to hardships, he has been, from his childhood, little accustomed to the luxury, which frequently in other countries surrounds persons of royal birth. Bred in the school of Potzdam, under the severe and continual inspection of the King his uncle, he has practised the most implicit obedience. Early taught to defend the Crown, which is one day to descend to him, he has passed through all the subordinate military ranks, up to that of Major-General in the Prussian service, which he now holds. The discipline to which every other officer

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is ſubjected, ſuffers no relaxation for the Heir Apparent. He dares not abſent himſelf from his duty, or be remiſs in its diſcharge, without incurring the higheſt reſentment of his Sovereign, diſplayed in the moſt public manner. Every morning, in winter, no leſs than in ſummer, he is to be found on the parade, before the palace of Potzdam; nor can he even leave that place, except by ſtealth, to viſit Berlin, unleſs by expreſs permiſſion from the King. Few Princes, who are probably deſtined to reign, have been treated in their youth with ſo much rigour.

If the heir to the Crown is by no means endowed with the abilities of Frederic, or of Prince Henry, his two uncles; he is, on the other hand, admitted to poſſeſs a ſolid and enlarged underſtanding. His mental qualities are certainly neither brilliant nor impoſing; but, they are far from being inadequate to the arduous ſituation which he is by and by to occupy. In the King he has had conſtantly before his eyes

eyes the greateſt model of ſucceſsful ambition and of ſuperior capacity, which any age can produce. His mind has been improved, if not by the ſtudy of polite letters, at leaſt by an acquaintance with tactics and the ſcience of war; nor is he deficient in more liberal branches of knowledge and information. He poſſeſſes the ineſtimable advantage of having been initiated from his cradle, into the ſyſtem of the Pruſſian adminiſtration, finances, and policy. Having already attained to a ripe age, it is leſs probable that he will be led into exceſſes of pleaſure or profuſion, whenever he ſhall aſcend the throne. The fabrick of the Pruſſian greatneſs has been conſtructed by a maſter-hand, which has long preſerved it; nor are the ſame talents requiſite for maintaining, as for erecting the edifice. Only ſuch a King as the preſent, perhaps, could have conquered and retained Sileſia, or could have acquired Poliſh Pruſſia: but, a much inferior Prince in energy or vigilence, may be able to keep poſſeſſion of them,

them, when tranfmitted to him in peaceful fucceffion.

Unfortunately the Heir Apparent has never been perfonally acceptable to, nor beloved by the King his uncle, who has always conceived and expreffed a mean opinion of his nephew's abilities. Though he refides conftantly at Potzdam, he is fcarcely ever at "Sans Souci;" and is rarely admitted to the royal table, unlefs when he accompanies his Majefty to Breflaw, or into other parts of his dominions. He has never been diftinguifhed by that preference, efteem, and partiality, which Frederic manifefts for his nephews of the family of Brunfwic; in particular for the Hereditary Prince, and his brother Prince Frederic, who have each apartments affigned them in "Sans Souci." It is impoffible not to difapprove a conduct, which is at once impolitic, unjuft, and fevere. The coldnefs and neglect with which the Prince Royal is treated, muft naturally tend rather to deprefs and to irritate, than to

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exalt or ennoble his mind. It may even have injurious public effects at ſome future period, and may lay the foundation of great national misfortunes. We muſt, on the other hand, admit that hiſtory furniſhes no models of Princes ſo truly great, as thoſe who have been educated in conſtraint, or in adverſity. It was the ſchool of Elizabeth, of Henry the Fourth, and of Frederic himſelf.

In one inſtance, notwithſtanding, the preſent King has manifeſted far more liberality of mind and indulgence towards his nephew, than he experienced himſelf from his own father. The Prince of Pruſſia has been twice married; but, neither in his firſt nor ſecond choice, does his uncle appear to have exerted any undue or tyrannical influence. Perhaps the ſeverity with which he was treated in that important tranſaction of his own life, may have induced him to leave his nephew more at liberty. He was married in July 1765, to Elizabeth, Princeſs of Brunſwic Wolfenbuttle, from whom he

was divorced about three years afterwards. Motives of ſtate rendering it neceſſary for him to contract another matrimonial alliance, as he had no male iſſue by his firſt wife, he remained for ſome time undecided in his preference. The German Empire with its numerous Princeſſes offered a variety of candidates, who were ſucceſſively named as likely to fill the vacant place in the Royal Family. I am aſſured that he manifeſted an inclination for the preſent Landgravine of Heſſe Caſſel, daughter of the Margrave of Brandenburgh Schwedt, one of the moſt beautiful women in Germany. She is ſaid, however, to have refuſed or declined the honour intended her. It is certain that he might have received the hand of his couſin Sophia Albertina, ſiſter of the preſent King of Sweden; but from motives which I do not pretend to gueſs, he was averſe to the match. At length the Princeſs Frederica Louiſa of Heſſe Darmſtadt was ſelected, and the nuptials were celebrated in July 1769. She is an amiable, virtuous, and pleaſing

pleaſing woman, poſſeſſing indeed neither the perſonal attractions, nor the graces of her predeceſſor, Elizabeth of Brunſwic; but exempt from her errors and defects. She is of a middle ſize, her countenance agreeable though not handſome, her manners eaſy and engaging; her character eſtimable, and formed to excite univerſal reſpect.

Notwithſtanding theſe claims to attention, ſhe does not enjoy the good fortune of being acceptable to the King, who has more than once mortified her in a public manner; and who ſhews her none of the flattering marks of preference and diſtinction, with which he was accuſtomed to honour the firſt Princeſs of Pruſſia. She reſides conſtantly at Potzdam, rarely permitted to viſit Berlin, and paſſes her life in a ſort of melancholy retirement. Her attendants are few, her eſtabliſhment ſcanty, and altogether deſtitute of ſplendor. Thoſe who have conſtant acceſs to her, aſſure me, that though not diſtinguiſhed by extraordinary endow-

ments of mind, her underſtanding is ſolid, and her converſation highly pleaſing. She has already fulfilled the great object of her marriage, by giving two heirs to the monarchy; her eldeſt ſon Frederic William, having been born in Auguſt 1770. If ſhe has not been able to captivate the affections, or to ſecure the conſtancy of her huſband, ſhe poſſeſſes at leaſt his eſteem, and receives from him every proof of external reſpect.

Like his father William Auguſtus, he does not pique himſelf on obſerving his nuptial fidelity, or even on concealing his irregularities. Frederic, ſevere on the parade, but, extremely relaxed on every point of moral or conjugal duty, is ſuppoſed to ſee with indifference the Prince's infidelity to the marriage bed. His preſent favourite is Mademoiſelle Enkel, whom he acknowledges as his miſtreſs, and by whom he has ſeveral children. I have ſeen her frequently, as ſhe has her box at the French Comedy. Like Madame de Pompadour and Madame du Barré, who ſucceſſively governed

governed France, her origin is not illuſtrious; but Nature in recompenſe has been laviſh to her in charms. They are, however, by no means ſufficiently powerful to retain the excluſive poſſeſſion of her lover. The Prince frequently comes to Berlin to viſit her incognito, without the King his uncle's knowledge; as ſhe dares not, on any conſideration, be ſeen at Potzdam. When on theſe ſecret expeditions, he always returns either during the night, or early on the enſuing morning.

The real character of the Prince of Pruſſia is probably as yet much concealed, and time alone can unfold it to the world. The ſuperior genius of the King, the eſtrangement which ſubſiſts bet ween them, and the degree of ſeverity, or rather tyranny, which is exercifed by Frederic over his nephew, compel him to remain in the ſhade. Whenever he aſcends the throne, Europe, as well as his ſubjects, will perhaps be aſtoniſhed at the diſplay of talents and qualities, which at preſent

he is not ſuſpected to poſſeſs. Many leading points of his diſpoſition and temper are, however, already perfectly aſcertained. In his manners, he is affable, communicative, and pleaſant: in ſociety, convivial, cheerful, and agreeable, without unbecoming familiarity. He is liberal to the greateſt degree; and he has manifeſted a warmth of adherence or attachment towards all who have ſuffered for his ſake, which does honour to the goodneſs of his heart. Various perſons, whom he has been ſuppoſed to diſtinguiſh by his notice or friendſhip, have on that account incurred the royal diſpleaſure, and have even been ſent into diſtant parts of the Pruſſian dominions. The Prince, from his narrow appointments, extends to them pecuniary relief. Nothing is more unqueſtionable than his perſonal courage, and he is neither deficient in ambition, nor in love of glory. Thoſe who know him beſt, have aſſured me that he will tread in the ſteps of his predeceſſor; and will have

no object nearer his heart, than to maintain and to augment the ſplendor of the Pruſſian Monarchy. They aſſert, that he will renounce pleaſure and diſſipation, for the cares of ſtate, and the duties of a ſovereign; but, futurity alone can prove the truth or the fallacy of theſe premature predictions.

It is certain, that notwithſtanding the luſtre of the preſent Monarch, and the natural effect of ſo diſtinguiſhed and brilliant a character, in exciting the national vanity of his ſubjects; yet, no inconſiderable part of them look forward, with anxiety and impatience, to the final period of his life. Independently of the love of novelty and change inherent in the nature of man, the Pruſſians have reaſons peculiar to themſelves for deſiring a new maſter. Frederic, declining in years and in health, ſevere, economical, vigilant, and difficult to deceive, may excite reſpect, but awakens no ſentiment of affection. Averſe to pleaſure, gallantry, or expence, he is neither ſurrounded by courtiers, nor acceſſible to flattery. The Prince, on the con-

trary, from natural diſpoſition, is ſuſceptible, amorous, liberal, and fond of ſociety. In him his ſubjects anticipate a more indulgent maſter; leſs elevated and impoſing, but, one whom they may love as well as admire. The Court, if that appellation can with propriety be given to the ſolitary retirement of Potzdam and "Sans Souci," will probably be transferred after the deceaſe of Frederic, in a greater or leſſer degree, to Berlin; and the metropolis, now deſerted by the Sovereign, will then reſume its gaiety. Such are the expectations formed of the Heir Apparent, and ſuch the pleaſing anticipations of future felicity under his reign!

It is natural that I ſhould ſay a few words relative to Prince Henry of Pruſſia; a perſon ſcarcely leſs diſtinguiſhed by his great endowments, than his elder brother the King. He is at this time near fifty-two years of age, homely in his perſon, and deſtitute of any external graces of figure, or deportment. Naturally ſilent, cold, and diſtant in his manners, he can nevertheleſs, when occa-

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ſion demands, ſhake off his habitual reſerve, and become affable, communicative, and ingratiating. To ſuperior natural abilities, he joins uncommon cultivation of mind; and like Frederic, he is no leſs gifted with the talents of a general, than with thoſe of a ſtateſman. During the whole courſe of the late war, the King always committed to his charge the moſt arduous undertakings, in which conſummate prudence or military ſkill were required. With inferior and ill-diſciplined troops, he not only ſuſtained, but repelled more than once, the Auſtrian and Saxon attacks. At the battle of Prague, he diſplayed the greateſt intrepidity. At that of Freyberg, he manifeſted talents for war, which rank him among the firſt commanders of the age. To the ſuperiority of his views and diſpoſitions, was principally due the victory which he there obtained, and of which I have already ſpoken elſewhere. His military talents are ſaid to be the reverſe of the King's. Frederic, enterprizing in his temper, ſeems formed for bold and offenſive meaſures.

measures. Prince Henry, more cold and cautious, is calculated for defensive war.

It is not only in the field that his abilities have been actively and beneficially employed, for the support of the Prussian Crown and Monarchy: he has encountered and surmounted obstacles in the cabinet equally difficult. To him the King committed the two delicate negociations opened with Catharine the Second, which changed the face of Europe, eventually produced the partition of Poland, and cemented, on lasting grounds, the friendship between the Courts of Petersburgh and Berlin. In the two visits which he made to the Empress for that purpose, when he acted at once as a minister of state and as an ambassador, he more than answered every expectation entertained of him, and effected all the leading points intrusted to his care. Such an union of talents is almost unexampled in two Princes so nearly allied by blood. There are not wanting persons here, who esteem him superior in capacity to the King; but

but the elevation of a throne is more calculated for the difplay of great endowments, than a private ftation.

In many particulars of their life and difpofition, even in their very defects, the fimilarity between the two brothers is ftriking. Like Frederic, Prince Henry is deftitute of male or female iffue. Like him too, the Prince is not of an amorous complexion, nor happy in his domeftic connexions. Both pafs a great portion of their lives in a fort of retreat, little feen except by the perfons who compofe their houfehold, and who conftitute their ordinary fociety. The Prince was married in 1752, to Wilhelmina, daughter of Maximilian, Landgrave of Heffe Caffel; but they neither eat, fpeak, meet, nor cohabit together. She is, neverthelefs, admitted to be not only an amiable and pleafing woman, but poffeffed of a fuperior underftanding. It certainly is not in the Royal Family of Pruffia, that examples of conjugal union or felicity can at prefent be eafily found. Such is the alienation which fubfifts between Prince

Henry

Henry and his wife, that he has always, when at Berlin, a separate table in the same Palace but he resides; during the far greater part of the year, at his seat of Rheinsberg, near the borders of the Duchy of Mecklenberg Strelitz. It is there that strangers are presented to him, as he rarely remains in the capital more than three months annually, from January till April. Though little consulted or employed by Frederic at present, in the calm of peace, no one doubts that if circumstances of public danger or difficulty should arise, his abilities would again be called into the most active exertion.

Of the King's four sisters, only one, the Princess Amelia, youngest of Frederic William's numerous family, has remained unmarried. She occupies a splendid palace in one of the best streets of the metropolis; and Frederic, who regards her with great affection, usually breakfasts with her whenever he occasionally visits Berlin. Having been elected Abbess of Quedlinbourg in 1751, the revenue arising from that eccle-

siastical

fiastical preferment enables her to maintain an eftablifhment fuitable to her birth. Her endowments of mind are afferted to be extraordinary; but her health and conftitution are altogether broken by difeafe, though fhe is fcarcely fifty-four years of age. Such are her infirmities, that fhe has entirely loft any eye, and the ufe of one arm; in confequence of which fhe is feldom feen in public, and never appears at Court.

With Prince Ferdinand of Pruffia, laft of the Royal line, I fhall conclude this letter. Although he may not have the fame perfonal claims to immortality with his two elder brothers, in perfonal courage he may juftly emulate them. During the late war he ferved in the Pruffian forces, and he holds the rank of General. It is not, however, to him that Frederic will probably ever intruft, in a moment of danger or emergency, the material interefts of the family of Brandenburgh. Prince Ferdinand has two fons by his prefent wife; fo that, notwithftanding the fterility of the Queen and

of

of the Princeſs Henry, the Crown, we may reaſonably conjecture, will not want males to inherit it in our time. Thoſe who believe that genius is tranſmitted by deſcent, will perhaps regret that neither the King nor Prince Henry are likely to leave behind them any poſterity. But, however greatly their abilities may have conduced to elevate the Pruſſian Monarchy to its preſent ſtate, we may ſecurely confide its future preſervation, to the valour, judgment, and probity of its collateral heirs.

LETTER VII.

Potzdam.—" Sans Souci."—The new Palace.—Reflections on Potzdam, and on the genius of the Prussian government.

LEIPSIC, *November* 9, 1777.

ON the fifth of this month I left Berlin, after a ſtay of about ſeven weeks, and arrived at Potzdam the ſame evening. It is difficult to imagine a more ſterile tract of country, than that which ſeparates the two cities. The whole is an expanſe of ſand, exhibiting ſcarcely any marks of cultivation, thinly peopled, dreary, and reſembling a wilderneſs, rather than the vicinity of a great metropolis. Groves of melancholy fir diverſify, without enlivening the proſpect; and few marks of agriculture or of opulence are ſeen. This appearance is, no doubt, to be chiefly attributed to the ungrateful nature of the ſoil; but ſomething muſt,

muſt, in my judgment, be allowed for the genius of the government, which is more directed to political aggrandizement, than to the felicity of the people.

If Berlin is conſidered as the capital of the Pruſſian Monarchy, Potzdam may be properly eſteemed the ordinary reſidence of the Sovereign, ever ſince the death of Frederic the Firſt, more than ſixty years ago. The late King, his ſon, preferred it, for many reaſons, to the metropolis; and the preſent King paſſes the far greater part of the year at Potzdam. Every ſquare and every ſtreet diſplay the characteriſtic marks of his genius. I regard it, indeed, more in the light of a military ſtation, or as the head-quarters of an army in cantonment, than as a mere city in the common acceptation of the term. Like Berlin, it is regular, modern, and conſtructed with ſymmetry. Some of the gates are of Athenian taſte and elegance, exhibiting models of architecture in various forms. The Royal Palace is a princely edifice, in front of which extends the parade, where Frederic, unleſs prevented by

by indiſpoſition, is every morning to be found, reviewing his guards. I ſaw him gallop along the line, and give the word of command in perſon, with all the fire and animation of a young man. Yet he is now more than ſixty-five years of age; a period of life, long before which the great Condé, as well as Marlborough, ceaſed to appear in the field; and after which, ſcarcely any of the moſt illuſtrious Generals of the laſt or preſent century, have ventured to aſſume in perſon the command of armies. If Prince Eugene and Marſhal Villars form exceptions to the remark, it muſt be admitted that they did not add to their laurels, by their concluding campaigns. The King of Pruſſia, notwithſtanding his bodily infirmities, ſtill preſerves the freſhneſs, and even much of the activity of his youth. In caſe of a rupture with Auſtria or Ruſſia, no man doubts that he would lead his troops in perſon againſt the enemy. He may perhaps be leſs enterprizing in his temper than he was formerly; but neither the energy nor vigor of his

faculties ſeem to have ſuffered any diminution.

Many cauſes, phyſical as well as moral, conduce to render Potzdam gloomy and cheerleſs. The local poſition is in itſelf deſtitute of natural gaiety or beauty. A ſandy, barren ſoil, on which only the fir loves to run up or to thrive, is an inherent and irremediable defect. It is even adverſe to the genius of architecture: for ſo looſe is the ground, that it appears to be incapable of long ſuſtaining the incumbent weight of any very large, or heavy ſtructure: a deformity viſible in various parts of the city, where the buildings have ſunk at the foundation. Yet I do not recollect to have heard that at Palmyra, which ſtands in the midſt of the ſands of Arabia, any of the temples or monuments, though of remote antiquity, lean from the perpendicular, or have ſuffered from the ſame cauſe. Is it that Frederic, though he loves to build, and to decorate; conſults principally his own gratification, or vanity, regardleſs of poſterity? It

certainly was not thus that Pericles embellished Athens; or that Agrippa and Adrian constructed the edifices intended to transmit their memories to distant times. Yet in monuments of taste, and the protection of all the fine arts, no less than in military fame, the King has ever been emulous to rival the greatest names of Greece or Rome.

Scarcely above a quarter of a mile from Potzdam, on a pleasing eminence, commanding a view of the city, the river Havel, and the adjacent country, stands the little palace of "Sans Souci." In celebrity, though not in magnitude or splendor, it may vie with Versailles, with the Escurial, or the Vatican; the most expensive fabrics of modern vanity and grandeur. The building itself is far from magnificent, consisting only of a long range of apartments on the ground, constructed by Frederic, not long after his accession to the Crown. It was there, in the early part of the present reign, that Voltaire, Maupertuis, Bielfield, Algarotti, Manstein, D'Ar-

gens, Kœning, and ſo many other extraordinary or ſuperior men, were accuſtomed frequently to hold their meetings, and to diſcuſs the moſt intereſting queſtions of ſcience or of philoſophy, in company with the King. That period of time terminated with the memorable war which began in 1756, when military occupations of a more urgent and imperious nature broke up their ſociety. During near ſeven years Frederic neither beheld his capital, nor "Sans Souci," which were both more than once in poſſeſſion of the Auſtrians or the Ruſſians. They nevertheleſs ſpared, and protected the latter from outrage. Except Voltaire, Frederic is now the ſole ſurvivor of that great knot; and here he paſſes in a retirement, partly Epicurean, partly philoſophic, the whole of the Summer and Autumn, when he is not abſent at the reviews in Sileſia, or at thoſe on the Viſtula. At "Sans Souci," he affects to diveſt himſelf of the cares and fatigues attached to Royalty; to unbend his mind from State affairs, and to live principally for ſociety,

ſociety, friendſhip, and knowledge. No viſitor of whatever rank intrudes unaſked, on the privacy of his retreat: but the Hereditary Prince of Brunſwic, as well as his brother Prince Frederic, each, have their reſpective apartments in the palace; and when there, they conſtantly dine at the royal table.

The central chamber of "Sans Souci," which is the eating room, is ſmall, but beautiful; the figure of it is oval; and architecture, as well as ſculpture, have united towards its decoration. Italy and Egypt furniſhed the marble with which the floor is inlaid; and the Corinthian pillars that ſupport the roof, were dug out of the quarries of Carrara. Two ſtatutes of exquiſite workmanſhip, ſtand in niches on either ſide the door; and in all the furniture, no leſs than in the ornaments, are diſplayed luxury and taſte. In order however to render it habitable, or at leaſt comfortable, a warmer and more genial climate is requiſite. On the ſhore of Baiæ, or of Sorrento, ſuch a retreat would be ſupremely delightful; but here,

during ten months of the year, we ſhiver while we admire. In ſummer the King conſtantly dines there; and adjoining to it are three chambers, one within the other, peculiarly appropriated to his own uſe.

The firſt apartment is a drawing-room of very moderate dimenſions, but elegant and adorned with a few paintings: unlike the generality of German rooms, it has in it a chimney. Frederic, who prefers comfort to grandeur, has diſcovered that nothing can compenſate for the cheerful and vivifying influence of a fire. The body may indeed be completely warmed by the equal diffuſion of heat from a ſtove; but the mind, the temper, and the fancy, receive animation as well as heat, from the ſight of a blazing hearth. The King is too well read in Horace and in Tibullus, not to feel how claſſical a warmth is beſtowed by the "ligna ſuper foco." It is one of the many proofs that might be adduced, how ſuperior he is, in little, as well as in greater things, to the generality of German

Princes,

Princes, who never *ſee* a fire, and are ſatisfied with *feeling* its operation. Near the chimney was placed a ſofa, very dirty, and much worn by the King's boots. Here he writes, reads, compoſes, and diſpatches buſineſs.

Next to it is the muſic-room; an amuſement of which Frederic, at every period of his life has been fond. The flute was, for a long time, his favorite inſtrument; but he has, not without reluctance, been obliged to renounce this elegant gratification, on account of the weakneſs of his lungs; and he now performs on the harpſichord. A very fine one ſtood in the apartment; and on a large marble table, tumbled together in confuſion, lay Sonatas, petrefactions, and a variety of curioſities, mineral, metallic, and literary. Only one painting found a place here; it was a portrait of the Emperor Joſeph the Second, lately ſent him as a preſent from Vienna. He doubtleſs retains it there, as William the Third would have preſerved that of Louis the Fourteenth conſtantly before his eyes, or as Alexander

would have done that of Darius. Towards the Court of Vienna, Frederic looks with natural and unceaſing ſolicitude. He is neither lulled into ſecurity by treaties, nor deceived by proteſtations. Conſcious that the Auſtrian Cabinet will ſeize the firſt occaſion of endeavoring to regain Sileſia, and of humbling the family of Brandenburgh, he keeps the image of his antagoniſt conſtantly before his eyes.

In the third and innermoſt chamber, his Majeſty ſleeps: but, on firſt entering, it is not eaſy to diſcover the preciſe place; a large receſs, gilded and deſigned for a bed of ſtate, remaining unoccupied. Behind a ſcreen, in one corner of the room, on a little camp bed, or rather couch, ſcarcely three feet wide, Frederic conſtantly repoſes. The whole furniture, as well as the ſcreen itſelf, are compoſed of pale blue ſatin, and at the foot ſtands an alarum clock. Accuſtomed to a military life, and inured to hardſbips, he prefers this bed to one of a larger ſize. In the gardens of "Sans Souci" almoſt cloſe to the palace, is the gallery of paintings

that

that he has conftructed: the walls, as well as the flour of which, are entirely incrufted with marble. Though the collection can neither compare in magnitude, with that of Drefden, or of Duffeldorf, it contains many valuable pieces, Italian and Flemifh. He ufually paffes an hour or more there almoft every day, when not prevented by more important occupations. Vanderwerff and Rubens are faid to be his favourite mafters.

I drove about a mile through the gardens of "Sans Souci," to the new palace; a magnificent ftructure erected by the King fince the conclufion of the peace of Hubertfburg in 1763, and only finifhed a few years ago. The front is grand, and the ftyle noble, but capricious and fingular; differing in fome points from the commonly eftablifhed rules of architecture. After contemplating its vaft extent, its fuperb furniture, its numerous apartments, capable of lodging the whole Royal Family, together with their attendants; we are compelled

pelled to lament that it ſtands in a ſandy plain, deſtitute of cheerfulneſs or beauty. It is indeed, difficult to aſſign a ſatisfactory reaſon why a Prince ſo economical, and ſo much an enemy to uſeleſs pomp, ſhould conſtruct a ſecond verſailles among the ſands of Brandenburgh. Was it not done, in order to convince all Europe, that the long, ruinous, and expenſive war which he ſuſtained, has neither impoveriſhed him, nor exhauſted his finances? Except during the Great Duke of Ruſſia's viſit to him laſt year, he has ſcarcely ever lodged in this Palace a ſingle night; and perhaps he will never inhabit it more. Content with having reared ſo ſuperb an edifice, he leaves it to be occupied by his ſucceſſors.

Notwithſtanding theſe magnificent conſtructions of art, whoſe effect is encreaſed by the external beauty and regularity of Potzdam, the mind wants ſomething on which to repoſe. After the firſt emotions of curioſity and admiration have ſubſided, we look round for comfort, plenty,

and

land felicity. But, baniſhed by the hand of military ſeverity, they are not any where to be found. No feſtive peaſants are ſeen along the ſides of the melancholy Havel, employed in the occupations or recreations of a country life. It ſeems to me that Homer might have written his "Iliad," or Voltaire his "Henriade," at Potzdam: but, Virgil could never have compoſed his "Georgics," nor Theocritus, his "Idylliums," under the ſhade of Frederic's laurels. No rural or paſtoral images preſent themſelves to the imagination. Guards and Huſſars conſtitute half the inhabitants; and even they ſeem rather detained by, force, than reſident from inclination, loyalty, or adherence. While I remained there, I thought perpetually of what Cicero ſaid to Marcellus; "Wherever you are, recollect that you are "equally within the power of the con-"queror." The Pruſſian Monarchy itſelf ſometimes reminds me of a vaſt priſon, in the gloomy centre of which appears the great keeper, occupied in the care of his

his captives. The air, which I am now breathing, ſeems lighter than in Brandenburgh, the human face more cheerful, the animal man more happy, and the aſpect of nature itſelf more grateful. I quitted the dominions of Frederic, penetrated with admiration of his talents, his victories, and his atchievements: but, with ſentiments ſuch as we experience on leaving a magnificent caſtle, ſurrounded with moats and battlements, where emblems of reſtraint continually force themſelves on the eye, or the imagination. After my departure from Potzdam, I reached the Saxon frontiers in a few hours; for the diſtance is very inconſiderable. Not only the ſoil becomes fertile, but the cultivation is better; and an air of plenty, mixed with content, is viſible in every countenance, on entering the territories of Saxony. It is impoſſible to expreſs how pleaſing is the effect of this change, on the mind.

LETTER VIII.

Poſition of Dreſden, local and political—Conduct of the King of Pruſſia, towards the Saxons, in the laſt war.—The Court.—Change in it ſince the Death of Auguſtus the Third.—Saxon Women.—Prince Charles of Saxony.—Story of the Apparition of the Chevalier de Saxe, raiſed by Schrepfer.—Reflections on it.—Death of Schrepfer.

DRESDEN, *November* 23, 1777.

IT is difficult to imagine a greater tranſition, than in paſſing from the Pruſſian, to the Saxon dominions; or a contraſt more ſtriking, than is preſented by Berlin and Dreſden. I am charmed with this city; with its environs, with its ſociety, and with its general aſpect. The ſandy plains of Brandenburgh are here exchanged for a rich, finely undulated, and populous country, covered with marks of opulence, induſtry, and freedom. Inſtead of the

the melancholy and deserted magnificence of Berlin, we find here a smaller capital, less regular in its construction; but cheerful, elegant, and in a situation the most picturesque. It retains indeed, in many parts, the frightful vestiges of bombardments, conflagrations, and ravages, principally inflicted by Frederic, during the course of the late war. Never, perhaps, was any situation, politically considered, more unfortunate than that of Dresden. All the local or physical advantages which the Saxon capital enjoys, are dearly purchased by its exposed position. Placed between two great rival powers, who are perpetually contending for superiority, the Elector is under a necessity on every rupture, of joining one or the other. If, as in the late war, he allies with Austria; his dominions, nay his capital and his palaces, are occupied, burnt, and demolished by the Prussians. Augustus the Third, King of Poland, grandfather to the present Elector, experienced this truth in its full extent. Driven

Driven from Drefden, he paffed moft of the concluding years of his reign, in a fort of inglorious exile from his paternal dominions, at Warfaw, among his elective fubjects, the Poles. Does he take part againft the Court of Vienna? He is, if poffible, expofed to greater calamities. The Bohemian frontiers are fcarcely four leagues diftant; and a body of Croats, or Pandours, fecretly detached by the enemy, may carry off the Elector himfelf, if he venture to take the diverfion of hunting at Moritzburg, or at Pilnitz, two of his palaces in the vicinity of Drefden.

Yet, under all thefe difadvantages, in the fhort time which has elapfed fince the conclufion of the late peace; fuch are the inherent fuperiorities of the foil of Saxony, fuch the induftry of its inhabitants, and fuch the wifdom, economy, and benignity of the prefent Government, that, except in Drefden itfelf, I can trace few marks of misfortune. Frederic's Generals, from neceffity more than from inclination, were reduced

to burn the ſuburbs in 1758; but he directed his bombs againſt the fineſt public edifices, during the ſiege in 1760. Animated by perſonal reſentment towards Count Bruhl, firſt miniſter and favorite of Auguſtus the Third, to whoſe influence and counſels he attributed the hoſtile part taken by his maſter; the King deſcended to manifeſt his indignation againſt that nobleman, in a manner as it appears to me, unworthy of ſo great a Prince. He not only deſtroyed Count Bruhl's palaces; but even cauſed, it is ſaid, the pavilions and ſtatues in his gardens, to be mutilated or defaced: a ſtate in which many of them ſtill remain at the preſent hour. Such a mode of revenge, if true, reſembles more the impotent fury of Cambyſes or of Caracalla, than the dignified reſentment which ſhould characterize a Sovereign, by whom the arts have been always cheriſhed. His enemies by no means retaliated with equal ſeverity on Berlin, or on Potzdam, of both which, for a ſhort time, they were repeatedly maſters;

masters; and which, though they plundered and ransomed, they neither defaced, nor demolished. During the winter of 1756, when Frederic occupied and resided at Dresden, he was accustomed to pass much of his leisure in the celebrated gallery of paintings constructed by Augustus the Third. It is by far the finest collection of that nature to be found in the north of Europe, and does honor to the taste as well as magnificence of the late King of Poland. I confess, however, that I am less struck with the "Notté" of Corregio, opposite to which Frederic used to cause his chair to be placed, than with many other pieces in the gallery.

Of the Saxon Court, though I have been presented to the Elector, I am incompetent to speak with information, from so short a residence. A glance suffices, nevertheless, to shew that it scarcely retains any traces of the splendor which characterized it under the reigns of Augustus the Second and Third. Those Princes, in addition to their hereditary possessions, were by election

Kings of Poland; and Drefden, from the beginning of the prefent century, down to the year 1756, might be faid to vie with Paris itfelf in the arts of pleafure and luxury. But, the accumulated calamities of war, under which Saxony groaned during more than fix years, nearly extinguifhed induftry, and impoverifhed every clafs of the people. The reigning Elector, economical, laborious, and neither attached to pleafure, nor to exhibitions of pomp, wifely repreffes every tendency to expence. Occupied meritorioufly in recovering his dominions from the ravages of Frederic, no lefs than from the effect of the profufion and mal-adminiftration of his predeceffors; he gives no part of his revenues to miftreffes, to dancers, to artifts, or to public exhibitions in any line.

When I recollect the captivating defcriptions of Drefden as it exifted under Auguftus the Second, given us by Lady Wortley Montagu, by Pollnitz, and by many other writers; I am tempted to think that I read of fome other place. Encampments, fhows,

and diverſions, perpetually ſucceeding each other, to which ſtrangers eagerly crowded from all the kingdoms of Europe, rendered it at once the moſt amuſing, as well as ſplendid Court in Germany. That Prince, whoſe bodily ſtrength equalled all that fable attributes to Ajax or to Theſeus, was formed to excel in manly exerciſes of every kind. Pleaſure, varied in a thouſand forms, ſeemed to conſtitute almoſt the only occupation of his reign. Banquets, or rather Bacchanalian Orgies, ſuch as the Regent Duke of Orleans, nearly at the ſame time, was accuſtomed to celebrate in the "Palais Royal," at Paris, were continually given by Auguſtus: while the moſt beautiful women of Poland and of Germany, allured by his liberality and munificence, ſtrove for the tranſitory poſſeſſion of his affections. It is in vain that you would now ſeek for beauty in the Saxon drawing-room. Except the Counteſs Loſs, I have not ſeen a ſingle woman of condition here, who has any pretenſions to be called handſome. Even Madame de Loſs, if critically
 examined,

examined, may rather be denominated elegant and pleaſing, than ſuperior in perſonal charms. If, however, the upper ranks can furniſh ſo few models for the painter, it by no means follows, that the ſex has degenerated within the laſt fifty years, in Saxony. Among the middle orders, and among the peaſants, the moſt charming figures are found; far ſuperior, in my opinion, to thoſe ordinarily ſeen in other parts of the German Empire. I have often been inclined to imagine, though it is perhaps ideal, that there is in the air, climate, and ſky of Dreſden and its environs, ſomething more favourable to beauty, than in Hanover, Brandenburgh, or Bavaria.

Among the Princes of the Electoral family, Prince Charles, uncle to the reigning Elector, is the moſt conſpicuous. He is here commonly denominated Duke of Courland, the States of that extenſive Dutchy having choſen him for their Sovereign, by the influence and protection of Elizabeth, late Empreſs of Ruſſia; an elevation to which

his uncle, the famous Maurice, Marſhal Saxe, had been raiſed at an earlier period of the preſent century. With that Princeſs's reign expired his tranſitory dignity; and the exiled Duke Biren, recalled by Peter the Third from Siberia, reſumed his ſuſpended rights as Duke of Courland. Prince Charles of Saxony is not only elegant in his perſon and manners; but highly amiable and accompliſhed. He and the Princeſs his wife, who was a Poliſh lady of the family of Craſinſky, inhabit the palace here in Dreſden, which belonged to the late Chevalier de Saxe, another of his uncles, and one of the many natural ſons of Auguſtus the Second, King of Poland.

In the great gallery of that palace, where I was preſented to Prince Charles three days ſince, was performed the memorable ſcene of raiſing the apparition of the Chevalier de Saxe. Never, perhaps, was a more audacious, or a more ſucceſsful experiment tried upon human weakneſs and credulity. As it happened only about four years ago, and as many perſons of the firſt rank and conſidera-

tion in this country were preſent, on the occaſion, the principal circumſtances attending it are well known and remembered. But, the ridicule which has attached to it, and the marked diſapprobation expreſſed by the Elector towards any repetition of ſuch experiments, render all thoſe who witneſſed it extremely ſhy of relating the tranſaction. It was not without difficulty, after repeated ſolicitation, that I obtained from one of the gentlemen who aſſiſted at it, the recital which I am about to make. He is a man of ſenſe, courage, and intelligence. I ſuppreſs his name; but, you may form from it ſome eſtimate of the human mind in this part of Europe; which in many reſpects, is certainly more open or liable to ſuperſtitious impreſſions, than with us. The Germans, almoſt univerſally, even thoſe of the ſoundeſt and moſt cultivated underſtandings, believe in the exiſtence of familiar ſpirits; in whoſe train follow witches, ghoſts, and the whole family of inviſible agents. If, however, we incline to conſider ſuch weakneſs with pity

or contempt, we ſhould recollect, that ſimilar proofs of human infirmity have been given by turns, in every European capital. The miracles, performed in the church-yard of St. Medard, at Paris, under Louis the Fifteenth's reign, which were only terminated by the royal interpoſition, are not yet forgotten. And ſcarcely fifteen years, I believe, are elapſed, ſince London had its "Chevalier de Saxe," in the memorable Cock-Lane ghoſt.

The man who here exhibited ſo extraordinary a proof of his art; for ſuch it muſt, in every caſe, be eſteemed; was a perſon of the name of Schrepfer, who originally reſided at Leipſic, of which city he was a native, and where he kept a coffee-houſe. But, his buſineſs not producing him either as much profit, or as much diſtinction as he aſpired to poſſeſs, he pretended to ſtudy magic, and to have acquired many ſecrets or powers connected with that imaginary ſcience. He boldly aſſerted that he had intercourſe with, and a control over ſpirits, whom

he could ſummon, command, and cauſe to diſappear, if not altogether at his pleaſure, yet by the force of his invocations. Theſe agents he had the ingenuity and effrontery to divide into three claſſes, the friendly, the evil, and the neutral; all of whom he knew how to diſtinguiſh at their approach, or on their appearance, by the ſounds or noiſes which preceded and attended them. Whenever he affected to exert his magical powers, he always began by calling to his aſſiſtance the benevolent ſpirits; in order, as he ſaid, to defend him againſt the attacks of the malignant ones. Pretenſions ſo extraordinary, ſuſtained by ſome exhibitions which impreſſed the ſpectators with aſtoniſhment, ſoon procured him no little reputation.

Schrepfer, about this time, while he ſtill reſided at Leipſic, had given offence to Prince Charles of Saxony, by ſome expreſſions relative to him, of an unbecoming or inſolent nature. The Prince, irritated at ſuch conduct, ordered an officer belonging to his houſehold to repair to Leipſic, and there

to

o inflict on Schrepfer, in his name, perfonal chaftifement. His orders were exactly executed: but Schrepfer, though he attempted no other refiftance, running into a corner of the room, threw himfelf on his knees, and loudly invoked his invifible allies to come to his affiftance. Their vifible appearance or interpofition were however unneceffary, in order to refcue him from further violence: the officer, it is afferted, having been so much alarmed at the invocation and its poffible confequences, as to quit the chamber with the utmoft precipitation.

A circumftance of fuch notoriety, as well as fo degrading in itfelf to Schrepfer, induced him to leave Leipfic. After an abfence of fome time, he appeared at Drefden, where he affumed a fictitious name, and announced that he was a colonel in the fervice of France. In that quality he even made an attempt to be prefented to the Elector; but Monfieur de Marbois, who acted as Chargé d'Affaires in the abfence of the French envoy, refufed to carry him to Court. His real name foon became known; and his pretences to fkill

in

in magic attracting many followers, his reputation ſpeedily reached Prince Charles. It was accompanied with ſuch extraordinary accounts of Schrepfer's powers, as to induce that Prince to make every exertion for obliterating the recollection of the indignity lately offered him. As one ſtep towards it, he did not heſitate to go in perſon to the "Hotel de Pologne," an inn where Schrepfer lodged; and in preſence of various witneſſes, to aſk his pardon for the blows given him, as well as to offer every amends that the nature of the affront admitted. Schrepfer, flattered by ſuch a condeſcenſion, having accepted the apologies, the Prince then requeſted to ſee ſome proofs of his ſupernatural art. It is pretended that he exhibited many; all of which only tended to augment the Prince's admiration, and to ſtimulate his curioſity for further ſpecimens.

But, the moſt difficult or ſublime operation of magic in all ages, has been to raiſe departed ſpirits from the tomb; a prodigy which Schrepfer made no ſecret of his ability to perform. Prince Charles having earneſtly,

ly, as well as repeatedly besought it of him; after many refusals, real or affected, obtained at length a reluctant promise to present before his eyes an apparition: for Schrepfer artfully professed the greatest repugnance and disinclination to the act, as being perilous to himself, and attended with various circumstances of horror. The promise thus obtained, it only remained, therefore, to fix on the spirit to be summoned from the tomb. After long consideration, the Chevalier de Saxe was named, and Schrepfer undertook to present his ghost in a visible form before a select company. The place chosen for making the experiment, was Prince Charles's Palace in Dresden. But, as it was well known that the Elector, having the misfortune to be neither credulous, nor inclined to permit such exhibitions in his capital, might disapprove and prohibit it, the strictest secrecy was observed previous to the affair.

The Chevalier de Saxe, third in order of birth, among the natural sons of Augustus the Second, King of Poland, was only half brother to the famous Marshal Count Saxe,

as they were ſprung from different mothers. In right of his, who was a Princeſs Lubomirſka, of a very illuſtrious Poliſh family, the Chevalier inherited conſiderable property in that country, as well as in Saxony. He reſided principally in Dreſden, and died only a few years ago, at his palace in this city; which his nephew Prince Charles, who became his principal heir, occupied after his deceaſe. In addition to his maternal eſtates, the Chevalier poſſeſſed a vaſt income from his military and other appointments in the Electoral ſervice; and as he left no iſſue, he was ſuppoſed to have amaſſed great ſums. Reports had been circulated, that money was concealed ſomewhere in the palace; but no perſon pretended to aſcertain the preciſe place where it was depoſited. If his ſpirit could be compelled to appear by magic power, that intereſting ſecret might be extorted from him. Thus curioſity combining with the hope of diſcovering a conſiderable treaſure, prompted Prince Charles, as it is ſuppoſed, to name his uncle, for the object of the experiment.

Schrepfer

Schrepfer naturally preferring darkneſs, as not only more private in itſelf, but every way better calculated for the effect of incantations; the company aſſembled on the appointed night. They were nineteen in number, of whom I perſonally know ſeveral, who are perſons of conſideration, character, and reſpectability. When they were met in the great gallery of Prince Charles's palace, the firſt object of all preſent was to ſecure the windows and doors, in order equally to prevent intruſion or deception. As far as precaution could effect it, they did ſo, and were ſatisfied that nothing except violence could procure acceſs or entrance. Schrepfer then acquainted them, that the act which he was about to perform, would demand all their firmneſs; and adviſed them to fortify their nerves by partaking of a bowl of punch, which was placed upon the table. Several of them, (indeed, as I believe, all except one or two, thinking the exhortation judicious,) very readily followed it; but, the gentleman from whom I received theſe particulars, declined to profit by the advice.

"I am

" I am come here," ſaid he to Schrepfer,
" to be preſent at raiſing an apparition.
" Either I will ſee all, or nothing. My re-
" ſolution is taken, and no inducement can
" make me put any thing within my lips."
Another of the company, who preſerved his preſence of mind, placed himſelf cloſe to the principal door, in order to watch if any one attempted to open or to force it. Theſe preparatory ſteps being taken, the great work began with the utmoſt ſolemnity.

Schrepfer commenced it, by retiring into a corner of the gallery, where kneeling down, with many myſterious ceremonies he invoked the ſpirits to appear, or rather to come to his aid; for it is allowed that none were ever viſible. A very conſiderable time elapſed before they obeyed; during which interval, he laboured apparently under great agitation of body and mind, being covered with a violent ſweat, and almoſt in convulſions, like the Pythoneſs of antiquity. At length, a loud clatter was heard at all the windows on the outſide; which was ſoon followed by another noiſe, reſembling more the effect produced

produced by a number of wet fingers drawn over the edge of glaſſes, than any thing elſe to which it could well be compared. This ſound announced, as he ſaid, the arrival of his good or protecting ſpirits, and ſeemed to encourage him to proceed in his incantation. A ſhort time afterwards a yelling was heard, of a frightful and unuſual nature, which came, as he declared, from the malignant ſpirits, whoſe preſence, as it ſeems, was neceſſary and indiſpenſable to the completion of the cataſtrophe.

The company were now, at leaſt the greater part of them, electrified with amazement, or petrified with horror; and of courſe fully prepared for every object or appearance which could be preſented to their view. Schrepfer continuing his invocations, the door ſuddenly opened with violence, and ſomething that reſembled a black ball or globe, rolled into the room. It was inveſted with ſmoke or cloud, in the midſt of which appeared to be a human face, like the countenance of the Chevalier de Saxe; much in the ſame manner, it would ſeem, that Corregio or Hannibal

bal Carrache have represented Jupiter appearing to Semelé. From this form issued a loud and angry voice, which exclaimed in German, "Carl, was wolte du mit mich?" "Charles, what wouldst thou with me? "Why dost thou disturb me?"

Language is inadequate to describe the consternation produced among the assembled spectators at so awful a sight. Either firmly persuaded that the appearance which they beheld, was spiritual and intangible; or deprived of resolution to approach and attempt to seize it; they appear to have made no effort to satisfy themselves of its incorporeal nature. The Prince, whose imprudent curiosity had summoned his uncle's ghost, and to whom, as the person principally responsible, the spectre addressed itself; far from manifesting self-possession, or attempting any reply, betrayed the strongest marks of horror and contrition. Throwing himself on his knees, he called on Heaven for mercy; while others of the terrified party earnestly besought the magician to give the only remaining proof of his art for which they now

now were anxious, by dismissing the apparition. But Schrepfer, though apparently willing to gratify them, found, or pretended to find, this effort beyond his power. However incredible, absurd, or ridiculous it may be thought, the persons who witnessed the scene, protest that near an hour elapsed, before, by the force of his invocations, the spectre could be compelled to disappear. Nay, when at length Schrepfer had succeeded in dismissing it; at the moment that the company began to resume a degree of serenity, the door, which had been closed, burst open again, and the same hideous form presented itself anew to their eyes. The most resolute and collected among them, were not proof to its second appearance, and a scene of universal dismay ensued. Schrepfer, however, by reiterated exorcisms or exertions, finally dismissed the apparition. The terrified spectators soon dispersed, overcome with amazement, and fully satisfied, as they well might be, of Schrepfer's supernatural powers.

Having thus related as ferioufly and circumftantially as I am able, the principal facts relative to the affair in queftion, it is natural to afk my own opinion of the ftory; and to demand whether I can explain or account for it in any rational manner. To fuch inquiries I muft frankly reply, that I can neither give any fatisfactory folution of it, nor have I heard any attempted, except the obvious and general one of human credulity and terror, operated upon by impofture and deception. But, *the manner* in which fo wonderful an illufion was produced, I am, in common with every perfon here, at a lofs to underftand. I believe, no man has yet clearly explained how the liquefaction of St. Januarius's blood is performed; though, out of Naples, I imagine few perfons attribute it to miraculous or fupernatural interpofition. We know from experience, how prodigious are the deceptions practifed in and upon optics. Nineteen men, met together for the avowed purpofe of feeing an apparition, and believing that

it is in human power to render a departed ſpirit viſible, are already half ſubdued to any impoſition, however groſs. Night, darkneſs, and the impoſing ſolemnity of magic invocations, bereave the ſtrongeſt minds of their ſelf-poſſeſſion. A bold and artful impoſtor might then trample on their reaſon, and preſent to their eyes ſome hideous figure properly accoutred for the occaſion. It muſt, however, always excite ſome aſtoniſhment and more regret, that among near twenty perſons, not one ſhould have endeavoured to lay hands on the ſpectre. Its ſecond appearance is likewiſe a circumſtance very difficult to account for, as it was unneceſſary in order to produce conviction, which had been fully effected. That it was a deception, no man of ſound underſtanding will doubt; but *how* it was managed or produced, the perſons who were duped, have either not yet diſcovered, or they do not think proper to diſcloſe. They are all, or nearly all, ſtill alive in this country, and they by no means boaſt of their adventure, or derive from it any ſort of vanity. On

the contrary, independent of the ridicule annexed to it, they all feel and expreſs the utmoſt repugnance to relating, or even to recollecting a ſcene, which has impreſſed on their imagination ſo much horror. Their friends dread and deprecate a renewal of the images then preſented to thoſe who were preſent; and a lady earneſtly beſought of me, not to preſs her huſband on a ſubject, of which he could never think or converſe without paſſing a ſleepleſs night. We muſt be content therefore I believe to reſolve it into German credulity or ſuperſtition, and congratulate ourſelves on our ſuperiority to ſuch puerile terrors.

The ſtory no ſooner ſpread through Dreſden, than the Elector expreſſed his diſapprobation of ſuch ſcenes, and iſſued his peremptory injunctions not to repeat them. Schrepfer ſoon retired to his native city, Leipſic; where his fame accompanied him, and drew after him a crowd of diſciples or votaries. To them he continued to give, as is confidently aſſerted here, numerous and aſtoniſhing

astonishing proofs of his supernatural power, some of which I have heard related; but after the specimen that I have detailed, all others would be at once tedious and superfluous. Schrepfer did not long enjoy his celebrity, and his death is not the least extraordinary part of his history. Three gentlemen, whom he had in some measure initiated into his mysteries; for he professed to instruct in the science of magic; were promised by him an exhibition more wonderful than any at which they had yet assisted. For this purpose they attended him into the wood of Rosendaal, which is at a small distance without the gates of Leipsic. It was in summer, before the sun rose, between three and four o'clock in the morning. When they came to a certain part of the grove, he desired them to remain there a little, while he went on one side, to make the requisite invocations. After waiting a few minutes, they heard the report of a pistol. Hastening to the spot, they found that he had shot himself, and was already without

ſenſe. He ſoon afterwards expired. All thoſe who believe him to have had intercourſe with evil ſpirits, affirm that he was tormented by them perpetually, which rendering his life miſerable, induced him to have recourſe to a piſtol. I imagine, however, you will think with Horace, that it is not neceſſary to call in ſupernatural interference, in order to account for the violent end of ſuch a man. He has left behind him many proſelytes; but, I believe, no one who pretends to equal knowledge of his ſecrets.

It is probable that my next letter will be dated from Prague, or from Vienna.

LETTER IX.

Journey from Dresden, through Prague, to Vienna.—State of that Capital, and of the Imperial Court, at the close of the year 1777.

VIENNA, *December* 20, 1777.

THREE weeks are nearly elapsed since I arrived in this city; but, before I enter on any particulars connected with it, let me mention briefly some circumstances of my journey through Bohemia. I left Dresden with regret, on the 24th of November, at midnight, in the midst of a heavy snow, and found myself at day-break, near the frontiers of Saxony. At a miserable village among the mountains, called Peterswalda, I entered the Austrian dominions: but such was the severity of the weather, and the depth of the snows, that it was with difficulty the carriage could proceed, or be prevented from oversetting. The road lay through defiles for several leagues, bounded by precipices to the left, that overhang the river Elbe; and

of which I could give you a defcription, if it had not been already better done many years ago, by Lady Wortley Montagu, when fhe travelled the fame road in her way to Conftantinople. I drove it, as fhe did, by night; and neither the danger nor the difficulties are much diminifhed fince her time. Paffing through Lowositz, famous for the battle fought there in 1756, I got to Prague in about thirty-eight hours after leaving Drefden.

My ftay in Prague was much too fhort to allow me, if I had the inclination, to give you any accurate defcription of the place. The fituation is wild and romantic; the city large, but not cheerful, except in thofe parts that lie on the banks of the river Moldaw, by which it is interfected. Prague, no longer the refidence of a Court, is now only the deferted capital of a dependant kingdom, little confidered among the numerous and widely fcattered provinces of the Houfe of Auftria. Its poffeffion has been difputed in almoft every age; and the ground on

all

all sides, like that of Troy in antiquity, is marked out by battles, which render it classic in the history of Germany. But they have not the same celebrity; *carent quia vate sacro.* On my journey through Bohemia, Moravia, and Upper Austria, I only stopped to change horses, and arrived in this city on the 30th of November.

Two days ago I was presented by Sir Robert Keith, to the Empress Queen, and afterwards to the Emperor Joseph. Maria Theresa received us in the deepest mourning, in a chamber hung with black velvet, on the third story of the palace. She has neither worn any other dress, nor inhabited any other apartments, since the decease of the late Emperor Francis her husband, more than twelve years ago. Her person retains no traces of her former beauty: but her manners are benign, gracious, and obliging. Over the doors of the room, I remarked the portraits of her grandfather Leopold, and of his deliverer, John Sobieski, King of Poland. In compliance with the antient etiquette of the Imperial Court,

Court, ſhe is always alone, when ſhe gives audience to foreign Miniſters, as is likewiſe her ſon the Emperor.

This capital, in common with Germany, enjoys at preſent the moſt complete ſerenity; and all the pleaſures of the winter are already begun, among which thoſe of the table ſeem not to be forgotten. Prince Kaunitz, Prince Colloredo, and a number of the firſt Miniſters or Nobility, do the honours of Vienna to ſtrangers, with equal hoſpitality and magnificence. The Court is much enlivened by the preſence of the Archducheſs of Milan, and her huſband the Archduke Ferdinand, who are lately arrived here from Lombardy, on a viſit to the Empreſs Queen. Maria Thereſa, ſinking in years; divided between her religious obſervances, and her civil duties; occupied alternately in buſineſs of ſtate, and in exerciſes of devotion; hopes to paſs the evening of her ſtormy reign in peace, ſurrounded by her numerous family. She has lived to extinguiſh the long hereditary enmities between the Houſes of Bourbon and Auſtria.

Three

Three Princeſſes, her daughters, the Queens of France and Naples, and the Archducheſs of Parma, who ſealed the reconciliation by their reſpective marriages, form the beſt guarantees for its ſtability. On the ſide of Pruſſia, there appears to be no immediate or obvious ſubject of apprehenſion. Ruſſia, if not in cloſe alliance with the cabinet of Vienna, at leaſt is not hoſtile; and the Turks, far from being formidable, are here conſidered rather as objects of plunder or of conqueſt, than as capable of exciting alarm.

The Emperor, on his part, is not leſs fully occupied than his mother; but buſineſs ſeems to be his principal purſuit and gratification. Emulous of Frederic, he wears like him a uniform on all occaſions, and manifeſts the warmeſt affection for his ſoldiery. Hunting is the only diverſion in which he indulges, unleſs we account travelling among the number of his amuſements; but even his travels are almoſt ſolely directed to objects of information. He has already accurately

accurately inſpected the far greater part of his own dominions; he is recently returned from France; and I am told, that he projects ſoon to viſit England.

Prince Kaunitz, firſt Miniſter of Maria Thereſa during three-and-twenty years, continues ſtill to guide the councils of his miſtreſs. To him is due the merit, if ſuch it be, of terminating the quarrels between the Houſe of Auſtria and France, as the meaſure was peculiarly his own. Though he appears to paſs the greater part of his time between his Manege, where he conſtantly rides, the ſociety which meets every evening at his palace, and his favorite diverſion of billiards; yet he finds leiſure for directing all the complicated affairs of the Empreſs Queen, and poſſeſſes an almoſt unlimited authority. Like her, declined in years, he nevertheleſs appears to be freſh and vigorous.

Prince Colloredo, as Vice-Chancellor of the Empire, is the firſt Miniſter of Joſeph the Second in his Imperial capacity; but he is ſuppoſed to enjoy far leſs of the private confidence

confidence of his maſter, than Marſhal Lacy. I hear little of Laudohn, who occupies ſo diſtinguiſhed a place in the eſteem of Frederic, and who performed ſuch eminent ſervices in the late war. Peace has reduced him to comparative inſignificance. In the perſonal affections of the Empreſs Queen, her daughter the Archducheſs Chriſtina is believed to have no rival. Her huſband, Prince Albert of Saxony, who is Governor of Hungary, has a palace at Preſburg; but they do not the leſs reſide in Vienna during the greater part of the winter. Among the foreign Miniſters, the French Embaſſador alone ſeems to enjoy a marked conſideration. The cloſe connexion actually ſubſiſting between this Court and that of Verſailles; added to the magnificent ſtyle in which he entertains, as repreſentative of Louis the Sixteenth; conduce to give the Baron de Breteuil a vaſt ſuperiority over every other member of the "Corps Diplomatique." It is no where more viſible than in the drawing-room of Prince Kaunitz himſelf.

Such

Such are the outlines of the Court and Cabinet of Vienna at the close of 1777, and such the principal persons who direct its movements. They will serve as landmarks, by which to enable you to form a judgment on the facts or events, which may occur during my stay here. In a short time I shall write again.

LETTER X.

Death of Maximilian Joseph, Elector of Bavaria.—Circumstances of his last Illness.—Arrival of the Intelligence at Vienna.—Cummunication of it to the Empress Queen.—Her Conduct.—Seizure of Lower Bavaria by the Austrians.—Speculations upon the probable Consequences of that Event.

VIENNA, *January* 9, 1778.

I LITTLE imagined, when I concluded my last letter, and described to you the state of profound repose, which this Court and capital presented on my arrival, that it would be so soon disturbed. Every thing then seemed to announce a continuance of public tranquillity; but, the unexpected death of the Elector of Bavaria has shaken the foundations on which it rested, and may, not improbably, be the prelude to new scenes of contest between Austria and Prussia. Laudohn, who for several years has lived in obscurity, and scarcely attracted notice, will perhaps be again

again oppofed to Frederic in the field. We have not yet recovered the aftonifhment into which this event has thrown us, and we are loft in fpeculations upon its poffible confequences. Before I enter further on fo important a fubject, let me relate to you the principal circumftances which threaten to involve Germany, and perhaps Europe, in frefh calamities.

The late Elector of Bavaria, Maximilian Jofeph, was the fon of that unfortunate Emperor, Charles the Seventh, who, after a fhort and miferable elevation to the Imperial dignity, faw himfelf driven by the Auftrians from his hereditary dominions; and foon afterwards expired at Munich, under the accumulated weight of misfortunes and difeafes. It is he, whom Johnfon, in his tranflation of the tenth Satire of Juvenal, has beautifully felected, as a confpicuous proof of modern pre-eminence in rank and in wretchednefs. You probably recollect the defcription, which is one of the moft animated ever drawn, and which the circumftances of the

the moment in which I am now writing, render peculiarly interesting:

"The bold Bavarian, in a luckless hour,
"Tries the dread summit of Cæsarean power;
"With unexpected legions bursts away,
"And sees defenceless realms accept his sway.
"Short sway! Fair Austria spreads her mournful charms,
"The Queen, the Beauty, sets the world in arms."

It may indeed be accounted among the wonderful revolutions of the present age, that Maria Theresa should now retaliate precisely in the same manner, upon the death of the *son*, the injuries which she sustained from the *father*. Already a very considerable portion of Bavaria has been seized on by her troops, and is incorporated with her dominions.

No event could have been more improbable, a few weeks since, than the decease of the Elector of Bavaria; who was still in the vigor of his age, about fifty years old, and of a strong constitution. He had always entertained great apprehensions of the small-pox, which he never had naturally

caught, and which he had not, like Catharine the Second, the wiſdom and magnanimity to anticipate by inoculation. Every precaution was ineffectual for preſerving him from the attacks of that fatal diſtemper. A young lady of quality, Madame de Riva, who happened to be on a viſit at the Court of Munich, and who lodged in the Electoral palace, was ſeized with the ſmall-pox. The nature of her diſeaſe was carefully concealed from the Elector; but her grandfather having been with her at her bedſide, imprudently came immediately afterwards into the room where the Elector was engaged at billiards. He had hardly remained a few minutes there, when that Prince exclaimed, "Some perſon here has the ſmall-pox; I feel it!" Inſtantly throwing down the mace which he had in his hand, he retired to his apartment, and ſoon was taken ill. Though the ſymptoms, from the beginning, were very alarming, yet it is highly probable, that under judicious management he might have ſurmounted the

 diſeaſe.

disease. But the Bavarian physicians, who are not yet skilled in the modern treatment of the small-pox, adhered to the antient practice of warmth and the exclusion of fresh air. During some days before his decease, no hopes of a favourable change were entertained; and the result sufficiently proves that this Court was fully prepared for his dissolution. He lay in a deplorable condition for the last forty-eight hours, his head swelled to a prodigious size, and his features hardly recognizable, from the malignant nature of the distemper. On the 30th of December, last Tuesday se'nnight, during the night, he expired; and Count Hartig, the Austrian Plenipotentiary at the Court of Bavaria, lost not an instant in dispatching a messenger to Prince Kaunitz, with the important intelligence.

The Courier alighted at the house of the first Minister, about half past six o'clock, on the evening of the 1st of January; which is a day of Gala, and the only one now observed as such in the whole year.

 All

All the nobility and persons of condition in Vienna, were then about to assemble in the great drawing-room of the palace, where the Empress Queen, the Emperor, and the Archduchesses, her daughters, were present. Maria Theresa sat down to play; while the Emperor, who never engages at cards, stood near her, occupied in conversation. I was at an inconsiderable distance from them. Prince Kaunitz having perused the dispatch from Munich, acquainting him with the Elector's death, immediately repaired to the Imperial palace, with which his own communicates by a gallery. Unwilling to excite remarks, or to attract the public attention, he did not shew himself; but sent in a person to inform the Emperor, that he was desirous to impart to his Majesty some intelligence of consequence. That Prince, who was probably aware of the nature of the news, which could not be unexpected, withdrew; but returned in a few minutes, and leaning over the table at which his mother was playing, he whispered some words

words in her ear. She inſtantly let fall the cards, and riſing up with evident marks of emotion, quitted the apartment. As this was ſudden, no one knew the cauſe; and the Empreſs's departure was ſo precipitate, as well as unforeſeen, that the Archducheſſes, her daughters, who were engaged each at a ſeparate card-table, remained for ſome moments in ignorance of her having left the room. When they were made acquainted with it, they likewiſe laid down their cards, and followed her. We all looked at each other in aſtoniſhment, conſcious that ſome event of moment had taken place, but uncertain of its nature. The Court broke up, and many conjectures were formed on the reaſons of the Empreſs's conduct. Next morning it was fully explained, by the news of the Elector of Bavaria's death, which became public.

That event muſt neceſſarily have been conſidered as inevitable, for ſome days previous to its actually taking place; and the general meaſures to be purſued upon it, for ſecuring,

 or

or feizing on a part of the Bavarian fucceffion, were no doubt, as we muft fuppofe, already fettled in the Cabinet. I know however, from good authority, that on the night of the firft of January, after the Emprefs Queen retired to her own apartments, a fecret council was there held, confifting of herfelf, the Emperor, and Prince Kaunitz. Much difference of opinion between them, relative to the *extent* of territory to be claimed and occupied by the Auftrian troops, then manifefted itfelf. The firft Minifter having fpread before their Majefties a map of Bavaria, pointed out the portions of that Electorate, to which he conceived the pretenfions of Maria Therefa might wifely and juftly be extended. The Emperor fupported him with all his force, and urged that troops fhould be inftantly fent to take poffeffion of the diftricts in queftion: but the Emprefs, become cautious from age, averfe to war, and perhaps not altogether fatisfied in her mind of the juftice of the claims about to be fet up, appeared to be very undecided.

She

She betrayed great agitation, often repeating with earnestness in German, "In God's "name, only take what we have a right to "demand! I foresee that it will end in war. "My wish is to end my days in peace."

Notwithstanding the Empress's reluctance to the measure of seizing by force on any part of the Bavarian territories, it was finally adopted on that night, and has been since carried into execution with incredible celerity. General Langlois, and Count Clairfait, by orders from the Court, entered on the newly claimed districts, without an hour's delay. They met, as might be supposed, with no resistance from the Bavarian or Palatine Government; and are already in possession of a very considerable tract of country. At the hour that I am writing, scarcely above a week after the reception of the news of the late Elector's death, we know here that the Imperial Commissaries are occupied in numbering and marking the houses, throughout all the villages of Lower Bavaria. Troops are pouring in, to sustain

those which were sent at first; and if no obstacles of an unexpected nature should arise, the whole transfer will be effected without shedding a drop of blood.

But, however tranquil affairs may be at present, in so early a stage of the business; we are naturally led to ask, whether they can terminate in the same manner? Will the Elector Palatine, who is heir to the Duchy of Bavaria and to every part of the succession, acquiesce without remonstrance in the claims of Maria Theresa and Joseph? Will his nephew and presumptive successor, the Duke of Deux-ponts, submit to be thus despoiled of a country which he considers as his future inheritance? Will the Elector of Saxony, whose mother is sister to the deceased Prince, and of course his allodial heir, take no interest in the affair? Even though all those Princes, from political weakness, or from any other motives, should tamely allow themselves to be plundered; can Prussia look on unconcerned, while his most formidable enemy aggrandizes himself, and extends

extends his territories? Frederic, whose vigilance never intermits, will probably interfere sooner or later, at least by negotiation, if not by arms. What are the pretensions of the Cabinet of Vienna? On what supposed right of consanguinity, or existing treaty are they founded, and how large is their extent? On all these interesting points, relative to which we are here at present completely ignorant, a short time must enable us to form an opinion.

The late Elector of Bavaria, though an amiable, mild, and beneficent Prince, was deficient in vigor and energy of character. His facility of temper, added to the want of economy, produced numerous abuses. Possessing neither ambition nor military talents, he manifested no wish to augment his political power; and instructed by his father's example, he only aspired to maintain his dominions in peace. By the Electress his wife, who was a Princess of Saxony, daughter of Augustus the Third, he has left no issue, and in him expires the *Gulielmine*

Line

Line of the Palatine Houſe. As head of the *Rodolphine* Branch, the Elector Palatine ſucceeds to his territories; but the Electoral dignity becomes extinct. Charles Theodore, the new *Duke* of Bavaria, who has long ſince reached Munich, is a man of talents, a patron of all the fine arts, of letters, and of learning. But, the exigency of his ſituation demands vigor, deciſion, and reſources of character. We ſhall ſoon ſee whether he means to reſiſt, or to ſubmit to the Auſtrian claims: a queſtion which is here diſcuſſed in every ſociety, and which may ſoon agitate all Europe. In my next letter I ſhall probably be able to ſpeak more decidedly upon the ſubject.

LETTER XI.

Pacific Aſpect of Affairs.—Amuſements of the Court, and of Vienna.—Deſcription of a "Courſe des Traineaux."—Society of Vienna.—Beniowſky.—His Adventures, and Eſcape from Kamſchatka.

VIENNA, *January* 26th, 1778.

THE political ſtorm which ſo lately threatened to overturn the repoſe of this country and of Europe, appears, if we credit every concurring account, to be paſt. We talk here of nothing except the continuance of peace, and are only occupied with amuſements. The Elector Palatine has not merely ſubmitted to the demands of Maria Thereſa and Joſeph, but has even ratified them by a formal ſtipulation. Whether the deſire of tranquillity, his inability to reſiſt ſo powerful a competitor, or any more concealed motives of private intereſt, have induced him to relinquiſh ſo large and valuable a part of the Bavarian ſucceſſion, we are unacquainted. As he is however, like

like the late Elector, his predeceſſor, deſtitute of legitimate iſſue, it is neceſſary that the Duke of Deux-ponts, his nephew and preſumptive heir, ſhould likewiſe acquieſce in the Auſtrian claims. Relative to the approbation of the King of Pruſſia, little concern ſeems to be expreſſed, and little ſerious oppoſition on his part appears to be expected. The Cabinet of Vienna probably relies on his age and infirmities, his well-known reluctance to engage again in war, and his conſciouſneſs of the ſtate of preparation in which he would find the Houſe of Auſtria. Yeſterday, Prince Joſeph Lobkowitz ſet off for Munich, to inveſt the Elector Palatine with the order of "the "Golden Fleece," in the name of their Imperial Majeſties. It is a bad exchange for his captured provinces. Indeed, his whole conduct in the tranſaction has not tended to raiſe his character even here, for magnanimity or ſpirit. Lampoons are publickly circulated through Vienna, in which he is treated with great ſeverity.

While,

While, by the rapid and successful seizure of so considerable a territory adjoining to Upper Austria and Bohemia, the political power and dominions of Maria Theresa are greatly and indefinitely augmented; Vienna presents a scene of amusement and festivity. Even the Court, which is not in general cheerful, has shaken off its formality, and relaxed somewhat of its gravity. To the presence of the Archduchess of Milan, we are indebted for so unusual an exhibition of gaiety and magnificence. She is a very pleasing and amiable Princess, an Italian, daughter and heiress of the Duke of Modena. Her person is by no means beautiful, but her manners captivate universally. As she loves diversions, particularly dancing, the Empress, in compliment to her, permits balls to be given in the Imperial palace. All foreigners of condition are invited; and she never fails to be present herself in person. But the most singular, as well as splendid spectacle which I have witnessed, is a "Course des Traineaux." Under the

reigns

reigns of Charles the Sixth, and of the late Emperor Francis, they were common; but, Joſeph the Second neither likes the amuſement, nor the expence attending it, which is conſiderable. Several hundred carts are always employed on the preceding day, to bring ſnow into the city, and to ſcatter it through the principal ſtreets, as otherwiſe the ſledges could not be driven with eaſe or ſafety.

During the preſent month, we have already had two "Courſes des Traineaux," one by day, and the other by torch-light: the firſt of which exhibitions produced, in my opinion, infinitely the fineſt effect. The Empreſs Queen, accompanied by the Archducheſſes Maria and Chriſtina, repaired to Marſhal Haddick's houſe, in order to be a ſpectatreſs of them; the Emperor declining to take any active part in the amuſement. The Archducheſs of Milan, and her ſiſter-in-law the Archducheſs Elizabeth, whoſe ſledges were conducted by the Archdukes Ferdinand and Maximilian, led the way.

way. More than thirty ſledges followed, drawn up one behind the other; in each of which was ſeated a lady, dreſſed in furs richly ornamented, and her head covered with a profuſion of jewels. Behind her ſtands the nobleman who drives, commonly as much decorated with diamonds as the lady. The ſledges themſelves, which form not the leaſt curious part of the ſight, are gilt and carved with great taſte, repreſenting the figures of dragons, ſerpents, peacocks, or monſters; and commonly coſt ſome thouſand florins. Before each, run footmen, or Heyduques, ſuperbly habited, carrying long poles* in their hands. Even the horſes are quite obſcured under the multiplicity of trappings, plumes, and ornaments, with which they are loaded. The "Grand Ecuyer," or Maſter of the Horſe, always begins the proceſſion. In this order they drive with amazing velocity, through all the principal ſtreets and ſquares of the capital, for about two hours, and finiſh at the Imperial palace.

Vienna offers besides, gratifications to the mind, far superior to any pleasure that spectacles such as these, however splendid, can afford. Many of the great nobility open their houses to receive company, and several are constantly at home almost every evening. Prince Kaunitz's, and Prince Colloredo's apartments are usually crowded. There, among General Officers, foreign Embassadors, prelates, ladies, and courtiers, are to be sometimes found Laudohn, confessedly the first military commander of the present age; and, though still more rarely, Metastasio, the most beautiful poet in his line of composition, which this, or, perhaps, any other period has produced. The Emperor not unfrequently presents himself at those assemblies. As he is never announced, and is accompanied only by a single chamberlain, his entrance occasions no confusion; and it has happened to me to be for many minutes in the same room, before I have perceived him, standing behind a chair, or mixed in the crowd.

crowd. He loves to converse, and is extremely communicative. I heard him relate his adventures, when travelling through the Bannat of Temeswaer and some parts of Sclavonia, only a few evenings ago, with equal vivacity and humour.

Among the singular characters which Vienna furnishes at the present moment, is the celebrated Count Beniowski. I meet him frequently in company, and have listened with admiration as well as entertainment to the recital of his adventures, which exceed in audacity every thing related of the Buccaneers in the last century, and have justly acquired him no small reputation. He is by birth a Hungarian, of a noble extraction, and not above thirty-six years old. During the period of general tranquillity which succeeded to the peace of 1763, when Poland offered almost the only field in Europe for enterprize and military talents; Beniowsky, in common with many of his countrymen, joined the Polish confederates, who took up arms against Stanis-

laus and his protectors the Russians. Their cause was unfortunate; the far greater number of those who ventured to oppose the troops of Catharine, having perished by the sword, or languished out their lives in poverty, exile, and every variety of wretchedness.

Beniowsky being taken prisoner in one of the skirmishes that took place among the woods near the frontiers of Hungary and Poland, was driven, with a number of other captives, from Cracow to the city of Kiow in the Ukraine. They were chained, as I have heard him declare, like wild beasts, exposed to all the vicissitudes of heat and cold, the severity of which were rendered more sensible by the want of cloths, of food, and of cleanliness. Though incapacitated by his wounds from walking, except with the assistance of crutches, he was not the less compelled to perform the march on foot; subjected to blows, and to every species of indignity, as well as cruelty. More than three-fourths of the number expired

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on the road; and the furvivors, among whom was Beniowfky, were transferred from Kiow to Cafan. While there, he endeavoured to excite an infurrection againft the Ruffian Government, in which he failed. Having neverthelefs effected his efcape from Cafan, he reached Peterfburgh without being difcovered; whence he projected to embark for fome other part of Europe. He had even contracted for his paffage in a Dutch fhip, and was going on board; when, either by the treachery of the Captain, or by the vigilance of the police, he was feized and committed to prifon.

Catherine only liberated him from confinement, to fend him into exile. After travelling many weeks in a covered fledge, over a fnowy wafte, furrounded by almoft perpetual darknefs, he arrived at Tobolfky in Siberia; where he learned that he was to be further fent on to Kamfchatka. Near a year elapfed between his departure from Peterfburgh, and his arrival at that favage and fequeftered extremity of the Ruffian

Empire. Having traversed the immense portion of Asia which separates Siberia from Kamschatka, he found on his arrival at his destination, a number of exiles, some among whom had been his friends and companions. After receiving fire-arms, they were ordered to provide their own subsistence, and likewise to furnish a certain number of furs and sables for the use of the Empress; those articles constituting the principal sources of her revenue.

Unsubdued by the nature of his situation, which seemed to preclude hope, as well as assistance, Beniowsky conceived the daring project of first liberating himself, and then of escaping from the dominions of Catharine. Having concerted measures for the purpose with his companions, who offered to follow and to perish with him, they attacked the Russian guard, and put them to the sword. Without losing an instant, Beniowsky marched against the fort, entered it, and cut to pieces the garrison, together with the governor himself, after a desperate resistance.

resistance. They then seized on all the furs in the public magazines, which they put on board a vessel that had been constructed for the purpose of making discoveries among the vast Archipelago of Islands scattered in the unknown ocean between Asia and America. Accompanied by near a hundred of his followers, he set sail, destitute of any means except courage and despair, for navigating through latitudes equally inclement, as they are unexplored by mariners.

In the course of his voyage, Beniowsky had to encounter almost every calamity by which human nature could be assailed. Famine, sickness, mutiny, tempest, and shipwreck, threatened by turns to terminate his romantic life and adventures. After vainly attempting to navigate north, by the Frozen Ocean that surrounds the Pole, he stood to the south; reached, he pretends, some of the islands dependant on Japan; and was hospitably received by the natives. In the island of Formosa, rendered famous by the pretended History of Psalmanasar,

where he likewise landed; he entered (I cannot clearly underſtand on what pretence,) into hoſtilities with the natives, which were productive of very ſanguinary conſequences. Finally entering the river of Macao in China, he arrived ſafely at Canton, from whence he returned to Europe. It is impoſſible to contemplate ſuch an enterprize, without a mixture of aſtoniſhment and admiration, mixed with incredulity. The expedition of the Argonauts, ſo celebrated in antiquity, the chiefs of which were raiſed to almoſt divine honours; cannot bear the ſmalleſt compariſon in real danger or difficulty, with Beniowſky's navigation. It may be queſtioned whether Columbus himſelf had greater impediments with which to ſtruggle, from the fears, the inſubordination, and the ſuperſtition of his followers, who were many times about to ſeize and to maſſacre him.

The French Cabinet, which under the late reign, during the period when it was governed by the Duke de Choiſeul, had originally

originally protected and even aided the Polish confederates, extended its notice to Beniowsky. Deeply impressed with his astonishing courage and success, the Duke d'Aiguillon, Choiseul's successor, not only caused him to be graciously received in France, where he landed on his return to Europe; but he has since conferred on Beniowsky various military, pecuniary, and honorary marks of the bounty of the French Crown. This extraordinary adventurer was soon afterwards sent out to Madagascar, a part of the globe to which the Cabinet of Versailles has long directed its attention; and with the interior, as well as productions of which country, they are far better acquainted than ourselves, or any European nation. I am assured that Beniowsky has already rendered to Louis the Sixteenth very important services there; and it is imagined that he will be again dispatched to Madagascar, to investigate more minutely the resources, commercial and political, of that unknown and extensive island. He is

at present on a visit here to his native country, where his surprizing adventures and desperate atchievements have secured him the most flattering reception. People of every rank, crowd round him to hear the story of his escape from Kamschatka, which he recounts with a coldness, and even phlegm, that encreases its effect on the auditors.

The lineaments of his countenance correspond wonderfully with his history, and his whole figure, which is robust and vigorous, conveys the idea of determined intrepidity. During his campaigns in Poland, he received numerous wounds; particularly one in the haunch, which has much disabled him from exertions of activity. When he reposes his body on the wounded side, which is greatly contracted in consequence of the muscles having been intersected, he appears of a middle size. But, when he rises on the other leg, he suddenly becomes near six feet in height. It is supposed that his stay here will not be of long duration, and that he means soon to return to France, in

in the military ſervice of which Crown he is engaged. Should he ever by any accident fall into the hands of the Ruſſians, Catharine would probably ſacrifice him to the number of her ſubjects whom Beniowſky put to death. But, of ſuch an event there ſeems little or no probability.

In my next, I may perhaps be able to conjecture with more aſſurance, as to the certainty of peace. At this moment, every thing beſpeaks a continuance of tranquillity.

LETTER XII.

Hostile Remonstrances of Prussia, respecting the Bavarian Succession.—Anecdotes of Marshal Lacy.—Anecdotes of General Laudohn.

VIENNA, *February* 16th, 1778.

SINCE I wrote last, the political sky is again become dark, and seems to portend a tempest, though perhaps it may not immediately take place. The flattering indications of peace, if not vanished, are at least obscured; and Bavaria, it appears, may yet involve the German Empire in war. Resistance is not however expected from the Cabinet of Munich, nor from that of Manheim. On the contrary, we know that the Elector Palatine, Duke of Bavaria, has already signed a treaty with this Court, by which he completely cedes the contested districts to Maria Theresa. But, from another quarter, very strong opposition has arisen. The Duke of Deux-ponts, far from acquiescing

acquiefcing in the renunciations of the Elector his uncle, has had a confidential interview at Potzdam with Frederic, for the purpofe of effectually oppofing, in conjunction with him, any difmemberment of the future Bavarian inheritance. All the allodial, or perfonal property of the deceafed Elector, is claimed by his fifter, the Electrefs Dowager of Saxony.

Their joint reclamations might, neverthelefs, be unavailing, if Pruffia could be induced to remain paffive. But, however averfe he may be to war, the King, it is underftood, has manifefted his refolution not to permit fo vaft an incorporation of territory to be effected, without remonftrance. He has already united himfelf with Saxony, taken the troops of the Elector into his own pay, and fent reiterated memorials to Prince Kaunitz, ftating the injuftice of the pretenfions of the Imperial Court. No fymptoms however of a difpofition to yield, or even to concede, are vifible here. The language held by Auftria, is high, firm, and almoft indignant. Maria Therefa probably wifhes

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for peace; but if we may believe report, or form a judgment from appearances, the Emperor desires a rupture rather than an accommodation. Never, it must be owned, was the House of Austria in better preparation for war: Artillery, troops, finances, all are ready on the shortest notice. They reckon likewise on Frederic's age, on his inabilities of body, and natural reluctance to commit his fame, as well as his acquisitions, to hazard. Perhaps, they reason well. At all events, it is curious to contrast the conduct of the same Prince in 1741, with his present line of action in 1778. He began his reign by attacking Maria Theresa, without provocation; by bursting in upon Silesia, and overturning the tranquillity of Germany, in order to aggrandize his dominions. In the evening of life, desirous of peace, he slowly rouses himself from repose; remonstrates, instead of marching into Bohemia; and presents himself as a barrier against the Imperial ambition, which menaces the independance, as well as the integrity, of the Germanic System.

Already

Already various regiments, particularly ſeveral of cavalry, are under orders to march towards Bohemia and Moravia. Thoſe of Lacy, and of Joſeph Colloredo, are arrived here, in their way to Prague or to Olmutz. No one doubts, that if a war ſhould eventually take place, the Emperor means to ſerve in perſon; but, the principal conduct of the campaign would be probably committed to the "duo Fulmina Belli," Marſhal Lacy, and General Laudohn. If we except the King of Pruſſia, and Prince Henry his brother; they may be juſtly accounted the greateſt commanders of the preſent century, in their different lines. The Empreſs Queen is fortunate in being able to entruſt her cauſe to ſuch leaders. With Marſhal Lacy I have the honour to be acquainted, and to meet him ſometimes in private ſociety. He is now approaching towards his ſixtieth year; but, it is impoſſible not to perceive, that when young, he muſt have been very handſome. In his perſon, he is tall and thin; his complexion ſallow, and his features ſmall.
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He has the figure, deportment, and manners of a man of quality; but, there is in them still more of the courtier and the gentleman, than of the soldier. Grave, and somewhat distant on first acquaintance, he becomes afterwards pleasing and communicative. He speaks French with equal ease and elegance; entertains magnificently, and his table is served with no less delicacy than profusion. Though now advancing fast to old age, he preserves a youthful appearance; and though he has been six times wounded by musket-balls, he enjoys perfect health; all the bullets having been extracted, without injury to his constitution. In his youth, he sacrificed to pleasure and dissipation; but at present he lives retired, mixes little with the gay world, and passes the evening of an active life, in the enjoyment of a dignified repose. Possessed of an immense fortune, partly transmitted to him by descent, and partly acquired in the course of long and honourable service; he uses it as one, who, while he knows the value of riches, is neverthe-

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leſs ſuperior to them. Of an elevated mind, above the little arts of intrigue, or of Court cabal; he is not leſs reſpected than beloved, by the Sovereigns whom he ſerves.

Lacy is by no means, like Laudohn, a ſoldier of fortune, though he has riſen by his talents. His extraction and family are Iriſh, but he was born in Ruſſia. Son of the famous Marſhal Lacy, who, in conjunction with Munich, commanded the Muſcovite armies againſt the Turks, and obtained ſo many victories over them in the laſt years of the Empreſs Anne; it was in that great ſchool he firſt learnt the art of war. I have heard him ſay, that his father ſent him to ſtudy at Lignitz in Sileſia, and afterwards at Vienna. In 1740, about the time of Maria Thereſa's acceſſion, he entered the Auſtrian ſervice, as an Enſign in the regiment of Count Brown, afterwards Marſhal Brown, who was killed at the battle of Prague. Having diſtinguiſhed himſelf by a thouſand acts of perſonal courage, activity, and ability, he roſe ſo rapidly to the

the rank of Major, that at the commencement of the war of 1756, he was already a Colonel, and soon became a Major-General. But, to Daun's protection and friendship, he was principally indebted for his elevation: a patronage which Lacy repaid by the most faithful adherence, and the most essential services. Daun always had recourse to him when under embarrassments in the field, and Lacy constantly urged or propelled the Marshal to measures of decision. I have already spoken elsewhere of Finck's surrender at Maxen, and of the celebrated retreat from Torgau; on both which occasions, Lacy acquired immortal honor. He has been accused of not advancing to Laudohn's assistance, when that General was beaten by Frederic at Lignitz; but the charge is, I believe, universally admitted to be unjust.

A degree of coldness, approaching to rivality, is however supposed to subsist between them, such as existed, in the last century between Condé and Turenne. Their characters,

ters, manners, and talents, are indeed, very diſſimilar. Lacy is not merely one of the firſt commanders of his time, admitted to be ſuperior even to Laudohn in the theory of war, in the ſcience of tactics, and in the judicious choice of ground for encampments; he is equally formed for the Cabinet and the drawing-room, as for the field. Enjoying the moſt diſtinguiſhed place in the Emperor's confidence and affection, that Prince viſits him at all hours, converſes with him on matters of buſineſs, while the Marſhal is dreſſing, and is ſuppoſed to conſult him on every point of moment. Nor is it only on military or political ſubjects, that Joſeph applies to him for advice and aſſiſtance. Lacy is the depoſitory of his moſt ſecret thoughts; participates his domeſtic troubles; and ſoothes him in thoſe moments of dejection, diſappointment, and chagrin, to which a divided ſovereignty is peculiarly liable. In the difficult ſcience of proviſioning an army, Lacy has no equal; and he is allowed to be the beſt Adjutant-General in

Europe.

Europe. To him, the whole arrangement, diſtribution, and management of the Auſtrian forces is committed in time of peace. The ſpirit of order, ſuſtained by judicious economy, which characłize him, enable Lacy to regulate with eaſe ſo complicated, as well as ſo immenſe a machine. When we reflect on theſe circumſtances, we ſhall not be ſurprized that he has attained, and we muſt admit that he deſerves, the high ſituation and fortune of which he is in poſſeſſion.

With Laudohn I have not the happineſs to be equally well acquainted, becauſe though he underſtands French tolerably well, he never converſes in that language. He ſpeaks German, and likewiſe Ruſſian imperfectly, on occaſions; but, in company his habitual reſerve rarely forſakes him. Naturally modeſt, taciturn, and ſhy, he ſcarcely ever obtrudes his opinions on any ſubject, and rather retires from notice, than ſolicits admiration. As he has no houſe in Vienna, he reſides at this time on his eſtate, about two leagues off, on the road to Lintz,

in

in great privacy; coming ſometimes, but rarely, to pay his Court to the Sovereign, or the Miniſters. Among the latter, Prince Kaunitz alone treats him with marks of perſonal friendſhip and diſtinction. Neither his education, his manners, nor his habits, qualify him indeed for the great world. In a mixed ſociety he is loſt, unleſs the diſcourſe turn upon ſubjects connected with war. Then his countenance ſuddenly lights up, and he becomes animated, eloquent, in a word a different man. I have witneſſed with pleaſure this tranſition.

General Laudohn, for he has not yet been created a Field Marſhal, though Frederic choſe to addreſs him by that title at the interview of Neiſs; is now about ſixty-two years of age, ſomewhat infirm, though originally of a tough and vigorous conſtitution. Subject to violent diſorders of the ſtomach and bowels, which frequently threaten his life, it is to be feared that one of theſe attacks may prove fatal to him. Like Lacy, he riſes in height above the middle ſize; but

but Laudohn's figure conveys only the idea of a ſoldier, rough, inelegant, and inured to camps. His face is long and meagre, his features coarſe and dark; more, I believe, from the effect of hardſhips, than from their natural formation. He wears his own hair, which time has conſiderably thinned, and preſents to common eyes, a lank and bony figure, deſtitute of animation or addreſs. Under ſuch an exterior are concealed thoſe talents, which have rendered him ſo juſtly celebrated, and which, on more than one occaſion, have ſhaken the Pruſſian Throne. The Emperor, if he does not honor him with the ſame marks of perſonal confidence and predilection which he ſhews to Lacy, is nevertheleſs deeply impreſſed with a ſenſe of Laudohn's paſt ſervices, and a conviction of his great abilities. As a General, the quality which peculiarly characterizes him, is admitted to be the rapidity and deciſion of his movements. After viewing the ground and reconnoitring the poſition of the enemy, he takes his reſolution in a moment, and

executes

executes it with the velocity of lightning. He is unable to act by a long train of reflection, which only renders him irresolute, as he himself declares; and it is commonly asserted even by those who most admit his claims to superior excellence, that he is not formed to direct the complicated operations of a campaign.

Laudohn is by birth a Livonian, born in or about the year 1716, when that province was already subjected by the arms of Peter the Great. His father was only a Lieutenant in the Russian armies, of Scotch extraction, being descended from the family of Loudon, though the orthography of the name has undergone some alteration in the lapse of time, or in the change of country. It reflects no little honor on the Scottish and Irish nations, that they have given so many illustrious commanders to Europe, during the course of the present century. Keith, Brown, Elphinstone, Lacy, Laudohn, as well as various others of inferior reputation whom I could name in the Imperial, Russian,

 Saxon,

Saxon, and Prussian service, are proofs of the assertion. At a very early period of life, Laudohn, as much from necessity as from inclination, embraced the profession of arms; and he actually fought in the ranks, as a private soldier, under the Imperial Generals, during the short war of 1733, between the Emperor Charles the Sixth and France. When peace was concluded two years afterwards, finding himself without provision of any kind, he was again compelled to seek for employment. At the other extremity of Europe, the Empress of Russia, Anne, had just engaged in hostilities with the Turks; and it is indisputable that Laudohn* marched, or rather walked from Heidelberg in the Palatinate, to the banks of the Black Sea, with his knapsack on his shoulder. Lacy and Munich being then occupied in the siege of Oczakow, Laudohn served under them; as he did during the whole progress of the war, till its termination in 1739.

Returning once more into Germany, he first

first attempted to enter, as a subalter officer, into the Prussian army; but his endeavours proving ineffectual, he therefore in the end of the year 1741, or the beginning of 1742, found means to procure an Ensign's commission in the Austrian service. Frederic could not then foresee, how dear the rejection of such an officer would cost him. Laudohn unaided by friends or connexions of any kind, rose slowly in military rank and honors. While a Lieutenant, quartered in Hungary, he married a Sclavonian woman, who possessed neither attractions of mind, nor of person Of an obscure family, she brought him little or no fortune. Sickly, uneducated, homely in her figure, she never appears in public; and her principal merit consists in the attachment that she feels for her husband, which rises to a sort of idolatry. They have no children, nor, as I believe, had they ever any issue. When Laudohn attained to the rank of Captain, Prince Kaunitz first distinguished him, and honored him with proofs of pecu-

lier esteem; a circumstance, of which that Minister is with reason vain. During the war of 1741, he was wounded, and it is the only material hurt he ever received in the course of so many campaigns.

The eminent services which he rendered to Maria Theresa between 1757 and 1763, were rewarded by her after the late peace, with the donation of an estate in Moravia. She afterwards purchased it of him for the sum of eighty thousand florins, or about seven thousand pounds sterling; and he may now be esteemed wealthy, according to the estimation of competence in Austria. His military appointments, which in time of peace, do not fall short of near a thousand pounds sterling a year, will be greatly augmented in case of a war, as there can be no doubt of his services being wanted; and his private fortune is, besides, ample. We are pleased, when we reflect that so illustrious a man is not subjected in his age to any privations; and that he cannot justly complain of the ingratitude or neglect

of

of thofe whom he has ferved. But, if he has experienced the bounty of the Sovereign, or the protection of the Minifter, he has felt not lefs fenfibly the jealoufy of the courtiers, as well as the enmity of the nobility. They treat his perfon with cold alienation; accufe him of being unfit, from the conftitutional melancholy of his temper, to contribute to the pleafures of fociety: and even attempt to attribute his greateft exploits more to fortune than to merit. There are neverthelefs, even in Vienna, many perfons of the higheft rank, who do juftice to his fuperior abilities, and who confider him as the beft prop of the Auftrian monarchy in a time of war or danger.

It might be thought invidious, and even improper, to draw a clofe comparifon between two living commanders, who have refpectively diftinguifhed themfelves fo much in different lines, and who may yet add new laurels to thofe which they have already acquired. We may however fafely affert that Lacy's talents are more univerfal, Laudohn's more

more concentrated. One is greater in the theory of war, in the vast detail requisite for enabling armies to act with effect, and in combining or directing a variety of military operations. The other has no equal in rapid, decisive, and successful execution. Lacy is more respected at Vienna: Laudohn it more dreaded at Berlin. The former enjoys all the confidence of Joseph: the latter possesses all the esteem of Frederic. If the Austrian officer looks up to the first; the Austrian soldier has his eye fixed on the second, crowds to his standard, and esteems himself certain of victory, under such a leader. Both have performed the most signal services to the state. But, it would be unjust to compare the affair of Maxen, or the retreat of Torgau, however meritorious, where Lacy acted in a subordinate capacity under Daun; with the capture of Glatz and Schweidnitz, or the victory of Landshut, in all which Laudohn commanded without a superior. If Lacy is more considered by the present age, in the circle where he

moves; Laudohn will probably fill a much higher place in the volume of fame, in distant times, and among foreign nations, when the little malignities, prejudices, and partialities of the hour are buried in oblivion. But it is time that I close this letter.

LETTER XIII.

Austrian Preparations for War.—Arrival of Troops.—Croats.—Empress Queen's Repugnance to Hostilities.—Advantages possessed by Prussia.—Efforts of the Archduchess Christina to prevent a Rupture.—Proposition of dismantling Vienna.—The Imperial Palace.

VIENNA, *March* 19th, 1778.

THE die seems at length to be thrown, and war is about to begin as soon as the season will permit. This city, which less than four months ago, when I arrived here, presented a picture of general and of permanent tranquillity, is now transformed into an Arsenal. The streets of Vienna as well as the public places, are crowded with cannon, ammunition, baggage, and all the apparatus of an approaching campaign. Every day, new regiments arrive under the walls; who, after having been reviewed, continue their

their march towards Bohemia or Moravia. Nothing can convey a more ſtriking idea of the greatneſs of the Houſe of Auſtria, the magnitude of its reſources, the extent of its dominion, and the number of provinces ſubject to Maria Thereſa, than the ſcene to which we are here daily witneſſes. From the ſhore of the Adriatic, and from the foot of the Appennine and the Carpathian mountains, to the frontiers of Moldavia and Walachia, troops are conſtantly pouring in to maintain her quarrel. Albanians, Croats, Hungarians, and Italians, ſucceſſively arrive in the vicinity of Vienna. So many different nations, united in one cauſe, remind me of the fabulous ages of the Earth, when all Greece, or the leſſer Aſia, flocked to a common ſtandard, and fought under the ſame leader.

It is in the irregular forces which Maria Thereſa can bring into the field, that ſhe poſſeſſes a great ſuperiority over her adverſary. The Croats and Hungarians, fierce, undiſciplined, and ſubjected to ſcarcely any military

military laws, are attached to the Houſe of Auſtria by prejudices and predilections of religion, manners, and education, peculiar to themſelves. Frederic has no troops of a ſimiliar deſcription to oppoſe to them, equally faithful and loyal. The Croat rarely or never deſerts: he is even incapacitated by his ignorance of the German language from mixing intimately with the ſoldiers of that nation. A degree of primeval rudeneſs and ſimplicity characterizes them, totally unlike the ſpirit which animates the mercenary ſtipendiary of modern armies. Fathers of families, followed by their ſons, at the command of their Sovereign, cheerfully quit their habitations on the diſtant banks of the Drave, the Teiſs, and the Lower Danube, to ſpill their blood in her cauſe. Hitherto the Croats have never been conſidered as regular troops; but, it is now intended to clothe and diſcipline them like the other regiments in the Auſtrian ſervice. It is a ſight equally novel and pleaſing, to ſee theſe corps arrive, dreſſed in the rude garb of their reſpective

 provinces,

provinces, and presenting in their whole appearance, a contrast to the soldier of every other European service. From the great magazines in the neighbourhood of this city they are furnished with arms, accoutrements, and all other requisites, before they prosecute their march towards the frontiers.

Maria Theresa derives nevertheless, little gratification or pleasure from these exhibitions of her power, and testimonies of affection to her person. It is no longer a secret that she deprecates a rupture, and is reluctantly dragged forward by her son. From the moment that intelligence arrived of the Elector of Bavaria's death, she foresaw with regret its probable consequences. Having passed the active period of life, and being only desirous of repose, she is not to be roused by presenting to her view objects of ambition, or to be impelled by a recollection of past injuries sustained from Prussia. Those who have access to her, witness the dejection of her spirits, and the agitation of her mind on the arrival of every

courier;

courier; they see her eyes perpetually red with weeping, or suffused in tears. Instead of demonstrating her satisfaction at the promptitude, with which her orders for putting the Austrian forces in motion, have been obeyed; she avert her eyes from every display of her military strength. Only a few days ago, when one of the finest regiments in the Imperial service arrived from Mantua, on the Esplanade, under the walls of Vienna, no entreaties could induce her to look upon them, from the apartments of the palace. She runs with eagerness to close the shutters, whenever troops pass under her windows. Anxious to prevent so great a calamity as war, she passes half her time in prayers; and yesterday she remained for three hours on her knees, in the Cathedral, invoking the Divine blessing to aid her efforts for maintaining the peace of Germany. Prince Kaunitz is gloomy, thoughtful, and less communicative in society. His situation, which is a singular one, demands consummate address, in order, while he

preserves

preſerves the affection of the mother, not to irritate, or alienate the ſon. During his long adminiſtration, he has not, probably, found himſelf in ſo painful, or ſo delicate a predicament. The Emperor alone appears unaffectedly gay, conſtantly in action, on horſeback before the ſun is riſen, and ready to receive with alacrity the various bodies of troops on their arrival.

Whatever may be the final event of the war which impends, two great advantages attend Pruſſia at its commencement. The firſt of theſe reſults from the juſtice of the cauſe in which Frederic is engaged: for, even here in Vienna, the claims ſet up by the Houſe of Auſtria on the Bavarian ſucceſſion, are by no means conſidered as incontеſtable. In addition to ſo important a circumſtance, which is neither to be deſpiſed nor forgotten, we ſhould recollect the alliance and co-operation of Saxony. That fertile and powerful Electorate, covering the whole frontier of Brandenburgh, is already in Frederic's poſſeſſion, and muſt be protected by his arms. If it is the cauſe of

of the German Empire in general, it is the cauſe of Saxony in a ſpecial manner, for which he is about to ſhake off the infirmities of age, and after ſo long a period of repoſe, to appear again in the field. Supported by the Saxons, while he is ſupplied from Miſnia and Luſatia with proviſions, he can commence offenſive operations, and render Bohemia the immediate theatre of war. His intimate knowledge of that country, where he has made ſo many campaigns, muſt neceſſarily give him a vaſt ſuperiority, and perhaps enable him to wreſt the northern provinces from Maria Thereſa.

Beſides the other motives which impel the Empreſs Queen to deplore hoſtilities, is to be conſidered the peculiar poſition of her daughter, the Archducheſs Chriſtina. That Princeſs, who is tenderly beloved by Maria Thereſa, was married near twelve years ago to Prince Albert of Saxony, ſon to the late King of Poland, and uncle of the reigning Elector. Thus adopted into the Auſtrian family, he has ever ſince reſided principally in the Court of Vienna, where he has apart-

ments

ments in the Imperial palace. Having been constituted Governor of Hungary, in that capacity he and the Archducheſs occupy the caſtle of Preſburg; but they are now here on a viſit to the Empreſs, over whom her daughter poſſeſſes a great aſcendant. She is warmly attached to her huſband; who on his part, from intereſt, as well as from a ſenſe of honor and gratitude, feels himſelf not leſs bound to eſpouſe the Auſtrian cauſe, and to ſhed, if neceſſary, his blood in the preſent quarrel. As it is ſuppoſed that he will command one of the armies deſtined to act againſt the common enemy; in the diſcharge of that duty, it may be his lot to enter Dreſden, and to deſolate the dominions of the family from which he ſprings. Such a conflict of principles and obligations, cannot fail to be deeply painful to a mind of ſenſibility. The Archducheſs, his wife, is known to be affected by it in the livelieſt manner. She deprecates the proſpect of a rupture, which muſt involve her huſband in unſpeakable embarraſſments: and ſhe has more than once

 thrown

thrown herſelf at her mother's feet, conjuring her with tears, while it is ſtill time, to recede from her pretentions on the Bavarian ſucceſſion, and to ſtop the effuſion of human blood. The Emperor who can neither be unacquainted with this fact, as may naturally be preſumed; nor is ignorant of the Archducheſs's influence over the Empreſs, may one day reſent, and even puniſh her oppoſition to his favorite meaſures.

The Carnival is now at an end; and Lent, which is here obſerved with extraordinary rigor, in compliance with the Empreſs's devotion, leaves me more at leiſure to viſit the principal objects of curioſity in Vienna. This capital conveys to a foreigner no mean idea of the grandeur of the Auſtrian line, under whoſe ſceptre are united ſo many ſcattered kingdoms and provinces. Thoſe which have been diſſevered from it in our own time, within the laſt fifty years, would form of themſelves a potent Monarchy. Naples, Sicily, Sardinia, Servia, Boſnia, and Sileſia, all belonged to the late Emperor, Charles the Sixth, at different periods of

his

his reign. Marſhal Colloredo told me, a few days ago, that he had been in garriſon at Belgrade, at Meſſina, and at Breſlaw, when each of thoſe places formed a part of the Auſtrian dominions. Vienna is not only populous, but the ſtreets are crowded with people of various nations. In my walks, I conſtantly meet with Hungarians, Greeks, Turks, and Poles, all habited in the peculiar dreſs of their reſpective countries. Nothing is more pictureſque and amuſing than ſuch a diverſity, which rarely occurs in London, or in Paris.

It is not, however, the city of Vienna, ſtrictly ſo denominated, which diſplays either the extent or the magnificence of a capital, ſuitable to the elective Chief of the German Empire, the hereditary Sovereign of ſo vaſt a tract of Europe. The neceſſity, whether real or imaginary, of fortifying Vienna, contracts it to a very narrow compaſs; indeed, to ſo ſmall a ſpace, that I have walked completely round the ramparts, at a quick pace, within fifty minutes. But, the ſuburbs, which inveſt it like a belt, and which are

only feparated from it by the Efplanade, are far fuperior in magnitude, as well as in beauty and elegance, to the city itfelf. There the great nobility principally refide in fummer, when not abfent on their eftates, or not ferving in the field. Probably, the next century will fee Vienna difmantled, and rendered, like Peterfburg, or Berlin, an open place. I have heard the queftion frequently agitated during my ftay here, whether it might not be made fo at this time, without danger. The Turks are no longer formidable as they were in the fixteenth century, under Soliman and Selim; and the fiege of 1683, when Leopold fled to Paffau, will not be fpeedily renewed in our time. Againft the King of Pruffia, the moft formidable adverfary of the Houfe of Auftria, the Danube alone forms almoft a fufficient protection, if guarded by the Imperial forces entrenched behind the river. But Maria Therefa has not yet forgotten that in 1741, the French and Bavarians advanced to St. Polten, fcarcely four leagues diftant; and that in 1758, when Frederic befieged Olmutz,

mutz, terror and consternation pervaded Vienna. The recollection of these disastrous scenes is too deeply impressed on her memory, ever to be erased; and as often as the subject of dismantling Vienna has been mentioned to her, she exclaims, "I have "already twice seen this city a frontier "garrison, exposed to hourly attack; I "will not unnecessarily expose myself to "similar or greater misfortunes in my old "age." It is however, more than possible that Joseph, whenever he succeeds his mother, may adopt an opposite line of policy and conduct.

The palace of the "Favorita," so frequently mentioned by Lady Wortley Montague, in which Charles the Sixth expired, is now converted by his daughter, into a seminary of education. Never was any residence less princely, or even commodious. Resembling rather a nunnery, than the habitation of a sovereign, it stands in one of the streets of a dusty suburb, without the smallest court or area in front, and commanding no prospect whatever. The "Bel-

 "videre,"

"videre," which belonged to the great Prince Eugene, and which was purchafed by Maria Therefa, from his only daughter and heirefs, the Princefs of Saxe Hilburghaufen, is far more fplendid. Conftructed on a fine eminence, at the extremity of the Carinthian fuburb, it enjoys an extenfive view, terminated to the fouth by the lofty mountains of Styria. Magnificent as it is, none of the Imperial Family ever inhabit it; and the Emperor has therefore, converted it into a repofitory for paintings. Some of the houfes of the great nobility far exceed in beauty, as well as in elegance and grandeur, either the "Favorita," or the "Belvidere."

The Imperial palace itfelf, which is fituate within the walls of Vienna, where both the Emprefs Queen, the Emperor, and fo many other members of their Family are lodged, conveys fcarcely any idea of the Majefty of the modern Cæfars, the fucceffors of Charlemagne, and the pretended reprefentatives of Auguftus. A vaft, confufed mafs of building, without fymmetry, plan, or architecture, it confifts of feveral courts

courts communicating with each other, erected in different ages, and occupying a prodigious ſpace; but deſtitute of any, even the ſmalleſt garden. The apartments which her Imperial Majeſty inhabits, are indeed pleaſant, becauſe they have a ſouthern aſpect, and in winter may be ſaid to form a comfortable, if not a princely reſidence: but, before the end of May, the heat commonly renders them inſupportable. Within the circuit of the palace, are not only compriſed various houſes, appropriated to ſome of the great Officers of State and Miniſters, who are lodged at the expence of the Sovereign; it includes beſides, in its immenſe circumference, a ſuperb Manege; the German play-houſe; the royal library, the cabinet of natural hiſtory; the jewel-office, where are preſerved the Imperial and Bohemian Crowns; no leſs than three chapels, in one of which the Empreſs uſually hears maſs every day; and the "Jeu de Paume," or Racket Court. The Emperor plays frequently at this game, in which he is tolerably expert. I ſaw him yeſterday, in a

grey

grey jacket, and thick worſted ſtockings, engaged at it for a conſiderable time, with his brother-in-law the Duke of Saxe Teſchen, and two noblemen who made the party. The exerciſe, which in itſelf is violent, might prove peculiarly fatal to the Emperor, who is affected with an aneuriſm in his leg. When he is heated, the pulſation of the artery is ſo ſtrong, that I am aſſured it may be perceptibly felt with the finger, through the thickeſt ſtocking. It is curious to reflect that the deſtiny of Germany and of Europe might be materially changed in an inſtant, by the burſting of a blood-veſſel, the coat of which cannot exceed the thickneſs of a wafer.

Early in the courſe of next month, I may probably viſit Hungary, but I ſhall write again, before I quit this capital.

LETTER XIV.

Anecdotes of Metastasio.—State of Public Affairs.—Departure of the Emperor Joseph to join the Army in Bohemia.

VIENNA, *April* 9th, 1778.

INSTEAD of wearying you with details of the military preparations, which here occupy the attention and conversation of every society; let me, before I set out for Buda, gratify your curiosity on another subject. You ask, whether I have seen Metastasio, and you desire to hear some particulars relative to so illustrious a person. He is so little seen in Vienna, that a stranger, unless introduced to him at his own house, may pass many months, I had almost said years, without often meeting him. I have been twice in company with him at Prince Colloredo's, where he is commonly found on great festivals: but, neither his inclination, his state of health, nor his period of life,

life, allow him to mix much in crowds. To Prince Kaunitz's he never comes; for they are not on terms of amity. Whether the misunderstanding has originated with the Minister, or may be attributed to the poet, is a point much contested; and on which I am unable to give a decided opinion.

If however, he does not enjoy the friendship of the Minister, he has, for near fifty years, been constantly honoured with the smiles of the Sovereign. The invitation of Charles the Sixth induced him to quit Rome for Vienna, and the patronage of that Monarch fixed him here for life. Though he has exchanged the banks of the Tyber, and the classic air of Italy, for the ungenial climate of the frozen Danube; his fancy does not appear to have suffered either in delicacy, or in luxuriance, from the transplantation. Yet the late Emperor, while he rewarded Metastasio with munificence, and loaded him with caresses, did not scruple to fetter the powers of the poet, by imposing on him restraints scarcely compatible with the enthusiasm of genius. Metastasio, in composing

his fineſt pieces, was always obliged to accommodate the opera to the length of time which the Emperor indicated or commanded. Endowed with more than ordinary ſenſibility, it may naturally be ſuppoſed that he could not reſiſt the effect of beauty. The Counteſs d'Altheim, one of the moſt charming women of the Court of Vienna, was the object of his paſſion. She had been previouſly beloved by Charles the Sixth himſelf, who was ſuppoſed to have been admitted by her to the uſual privileges of royal lovers; nor was it till after the deceaſe of his Imperial rival, that Metaſtaſio ventured to divulge his flame. Even then, as if conſcious of his temerity, he drew acroſs it the myſterious veil of poetry and fiction. He has celebrated the Counteſs d'Altheim under an imaginary name, in various of his compoſitions. Whether ſhe returned his affection, is doubtful; but Meteſtaſio's attachment, like Petrarch's for Laura, or Taſſo's for Leonora d'Eſté, never exceeded the limits of reſpectful homage.

homage, and demanded no improper facrifices.

This celebrated perfon, who is now near eighty years of age, though he enjoys uncommon health, begins to bend under the preffure of time. Thofe who know him intimately, affure me that he is exceedingly broken and altered within the laft five years. In his perfon he is fhort and thick, but not corpulent. His countenance is expreffive; his nofe difproportionately large, and his complexion pale or rather fallow, like an Italian. He always wears the drefs of an Abbé, and nothing can be fo fyftematically methodical as his manner of life. Metaftafio rifes betimes, goes out every day at a quarter before twelve to hear mafs, returns home, and dines punctually at two. For near, or quite thirty years paft, he has never dined out any where. In the evening he repairs conftantly, when his health permits, to the houfe of Mademoifelle Figarolle. She is a woman of quality, poffeffes a very cultivated mind, and though no longer young,

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she has not ceased to be agreeable in Metastasio's opinion, whose attachment to her is of ancient date. Precisely at ten he leaves her, and retires to rest.

Baron Hagen, President of the Aulic Council, divides with Mademoiselle Figarelli, his friendship and his leisure. They pass much of their time together, occupied in literary pursuits, peculiarly in the perusal of the great writers of antiquity. Metastasio speaks French, and converses in that language with facility; but, like every Italian, he prefers his native tongue. He is well lodged, on a third floor, in the "Cole Marck," and the apartments which he occupies, are provided him by the Crown. Maria Theresa, emulous of her father in that respect, during the course of her long reign, has distinguished him by every possible mark of favor and consideration. He receives from her bounty, at this time, an annual pension of six thousand florins, or about seven hundred pounds sterling, and if we except Voltaire, I believe he

he is, without diſpute, the wealthieſt poet now exiſting in Europe. From his infancy he ſeems to have been not leſs favoured by Fortune, than enriched by Nature. No perſon here with whom I have converſed, ventures to aſſert poſitively the name of his parents; and even the preciſe place of his birth is hardly leſs conteſted than was that of Homer. He was born either in Tuſcany, or in the Papal territories; but unqueſtionably of an origin very humble and obſcure. When a boy, like Pope, "he liſped in numbers;" compoſed verſes without effort, or almoſt premeditation, and recited them in the ſtreets of Rome, to which city he had been carried in his childhood. It was there that his uncommon powers excited the wonder and attention of Gravina, one of the moſt eminent legal practitioners of Italy, in the beginning of the preſent century. Such was their effect on him, that he took the boy home, educated him, and finding his capacity expand with his years, Gravina adopted him, and made him heir to his little

little fortune. Even his real name is totally unknown, or at leaſt very problematical. The denomination which he bears, and which he has rendered ſo celebrated, was given him by Gravina, either to conceal his original name, or as a ſubſtitute; Metaſtaſio being a word of Greek derivation, and evidently factitious. Charles the Sixth, by inviting him to Vienna, and amply rewarding his talents, placed him above dependance. The preſent Empreſs has rendered him wealthy. He now paſſes the evening of life, in the midſt of the moſt delicious repoſe, ſurrounded by every comfort, eaſy in his circumſtances, and ſecure of immortality as long as poetry and genius are admired among men.

This morning, the Duke of Saxe Teſchen ſet out for Olmutz, accompanied by the Archducheſs his wife, who quitted him at the diſtance of ſome leagues, to return to this city: a ſeparation which did not take place, without violent emotions on her part. It is underſtood that he is to command the

army of Moravia, aided by Marſhal Haddick: an appointment probably choſen with the intention of removing him to a diſtance from Saxony. All the preparations and indications of a ſpeedy rupture, between Auſtria and Pruſſia, continue. Laudohn, who at length has been created a Field-Marſhal, is already arrived in Bohemia, where the ſtorm is expected to burſt. Yet negociations ſtill ſubſiſt, and couriers come almoſt daily from Dreſden or Berlin, which keep alive the hope of peace. The Emperor's departure is however ſuppoſed to be imminent, after which every rational proſpect of an accommodation muſt be at an end. We know that the Archduke Maximilian and Marſhal Lacy are to accompany him. My next letter will be written from ſome part of Hungary.

POSTSCRIPT.

April 12th.

The Emperor went yeſterday to join the army. He and his brother Maximilian roſe

at

at four o'clock in the morning; and as ſoon as it was light, they walked for ſome time on the ramparts, waiting for the Empreſs Queen, in order to take leave of her. When ſhe was ready, they repaired to her apartment, and proceeded together to the chapel in the palace. There, on their knees, they paſſed above an hour in prayer, invoking the Divine aſſiſtance on the Auſtrian arms. Maria Thereſa was extremely agitated during the whole ſervice; but, when at the concluſion, ſhe prepared to bid her ſons adieu, her grief became too ſtrong for her frame. She held the Emperor long in her arms, ſobbed, and, at ſeparating from him, nearly fainted. Joſeph tore himſelf from his mother's embraces, carrying with him her parting benediction. Marſhal Lacy is gone with them, and they took the road to Olmutz, from which city they repair to Prague. I am ſetting out for Eſterhazi in Hungary.

LETTER XV.

Journey to Buda.—Flagellants.—State of Hungary.—Turkiſh Edifices at Buda.—Public Baths.

BUDA, *April* 19th, 1778.

I LEFT Vienna a few hours after I had concluded my laſt letter, and have been already three days in this city. The contraſt between the Hungarian and the Auſtrian capital, is one of the moſt ſtriking to be conceived. Never perhaps were two nations more diſſimilar in manners, dreſs, and appearance, than the German and the Hungarian. Even the ſuperſtition of Vienna, is far outdone by that of Buda. The firſt object viſible from the windows of the Inn, on the morning after my arrival, were flagellants marching ſlowly through the ſtreets, covered with blood, and dragging along croſſes of a vaſt weight, followed by crowds

of

of people. It was Good Friday, and the whole city ſeemed to be animated by the ſame ſpirit of penitential and gloomy devotion. I could have fancied myſelf tranſported to Toledo or Madrid, as deſcribed by Madame de Danois, near a century ago. The flagellants wore hoods or ſacks over their heads, in order to conceal their faces: but their backs, which were entirely naked, bore the ſanguinary marks of the ſcourge inflicted at every ſtep. I am aſſured that the perſons who ſubmit to this voluntary puniſhment, are frequently men of rank, and that the practice is by no means confined to the inferior orders, or to the bigotted vulgar.

It is not my intention to enter on the particulars of my journey through Hungary. I ſtopped for a few hours at Räab, a city memorable for being the termination of the Ottoman conqueſts towards Germany. Happily for the Houſe of Auſtria, the Sultans advanced no further. Amurath the Third made himſelf maſter of it, towards the cloſe of the ſixteenth century; a period when the

 Imperial

Imperial family, under the feeble government of the Emperor Rodolph the Second, was ſunk into the moſt deplorable ſtate of political annihilation. Much of the road to Buda lies near the bank of the Danube, which is of very conſiderable magitude. It is ſtriking to behold ſo noble a river flowing majeſtically in ſilence, through one of the richeſt countries in Europe; but almoſt deſtitute of commerce, navigation, or population. From Räab to this city, a tract of near a hundred miles, I ſaw ſcarcely a ſingle boat or ſail of any kind upon the ſtream. All is ſolitary and inanimate: how unlike the ſcenery of the Rhine, or the Loire, where, at every curve of the river, villages, caſtles, and habitations preſent themſelves to the eye. It is by no means in the tyranny or incapacity of the preſent government, that we muſt ſeek for the principal cauſe of this deſolation. Hungary, till the period of the acceſſion of the late Emperor Charles the Sixth, in 1711, was for more than two centuries, the moſt unfortunate kingdom of Europe. The pro-

vinces of the new world were not more cruelly plundered by the Spanish conquerors; Peru and Mexico were not more ravaged by Cortez, or Pizarro, than Hungary was desolated by the Turkish Sultans. Solyman the Magnificent and his successors, repeatedly carried off the greater part of the inhabitants into slavery, without distinction of age, rank, or sex. Completely masters of the kingdom, and in possession of Buda the capital; if we except the royal title and ornaments, scarcely any thing else remained to the House of Austria. It is only ninety-two years since the expulsion of the Turks from the city where I am now writing; Charles the Fifth, Duke of Lorrain, at the head of the Imperial forces, having entered it at the Breach, in 1686, after a long and desperate resistance.

To the Ottoman devastations, succeeded the oppressive tyranny of Leopold and of Joseph the First, scarcely less destructive, or less sanguinary. Perpetual insurrections, and attempts at emancipation, were repressed under those Princes, with all the severity of

arbitrary power. The ſcaffold of Eperies, a town of Upper Hungary, continued for many months at the commencement of the preſent century, to exhibit a ſcene of blood the moſt revolting to human nature, and which has no parallel in modern hiſtory. Scarcely have two beneficent reigns of near fourſcore years, cloſed thoſe wounds. A great length of time, and a wiſe adminiſtration, ſuſtained by the judicious encouragement of induſtry, arts, and manufactures, can alone, by their united operation, reſtore Hungary to its juſt rank in the ſcale of nations.

Buda preſents at this time many curious monuments of the Mahometant taſte, as well as ſuperſtition. In the lower town, on the very edge of the Danube, ſtands a moſque, with its minaret, in perfect preſervation, which is now converted into a manufactory of ſalt-petre. Though defaced by time and neglect, it conveys no unfavorable idea of Turkiſh architecture. Its figure is an octagon, and it conſtituted the principal religious edifice of the city, while Buda was under the Ottoman yoke. But the hot baths, from

which I am juſt returned, are a ſtill more amuſing object of inſpection. It was impoſſible not to recollect, while conſidering them, the deſcription given by Lady Wortley Montague, of the baths of Sophia. Men, women, and children were bathing promiſcuouſly, or lying round the baſon, ſtretched in a variety of attitudes. The females, though not altogether naked, were nearly in that ſtate, and the greater part excited no ſentiment except diſguſt. I ſaw, nevertheleſs, among them, one or two tolerably pretty figures, occupied in combing each other's hair.

The Turks while in poſſeſſion of Buda, during near a hundred and fifty years, ſeem to have paid particular attention to the conſtruction and preſervation of the public baths. They are ſpacious, and ſtill form a principal recreation of the inhabitants, who paſs many hours almoſt every day, either in bathing, or indolently reclined on the ſides of the baſon. The heat is, nevertheleſs, ſo great, occaſioned by the vapor which ariſes from the water, that it is ſcarcely ſupportable beyond a few

few minutes. Every part of the building is composed of stone, the vaulted roof being perforated with holes, in order to admit the light. The water, which pours continually into the bath, through two or more channels, is strongly impregnated with mineral qualities. Though the price paid for bathing by the common people, which is only about a halfpenny, cannot exclude even the lowest vulgar, yet no dissolution of manners is found to arise from such a promiscuous concourse of both sexes, in a state approaching to nudity. The baths in the Rascian or Sclavonian suburb, are still hotter than those in the Hungarian town. Both merit peculiar attention, as being, I believe, the only edifices of the kind that exist in Europe, which have been constructed by the Turks, beyond the actual limits of the Ottoman dominions.

Every country has had its periods of comparative felicity*, glory, and tranquillity. The golden age of Hungary, was unquestionably the reign of Matthias Corvinus, in the fifteenth century; when Buda, one of the most polished and civilized capitals

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in the world, the ſeat of arts and letters, might look down with contempt upon Vienna. The Emperor Frederic the Third, driven from that city, and reduced to wander ignominiouſly over Germany, beheld his Palace occupied by Matthias Corvinus; who little imagined that the Houſe of Auſtria, from ſuch a ſtate of depreſſion, would ſo ſoon emerge into power and proſperity. But, with their independence, the Hungarians loſt their political pre-eminence; and Buda, like Prague, abandoned by its Princes, ſucceſſively ſunk into the deſerted capital of a Turkiſh, or an Auſtrian province. The Archducheſs Chriſtina and her huſband, rarely or never viſit it: when they are not at Vienna, they reſide at Preſburg, where the inſignia of the crown are always preſerved. Yet, the ſuperb ſituation of Buda, in the center of the kingdom, and the local beauties, as well as advantages of its poſition, might well challenge the preference. To-morrow I ſhall continue my journey towards Schemnitz, on a viſit to the Hungarian Mines.

LETTER XVI.

Journey from Buda to the Mines at Schemnitz. —Mines of Cremnitz.—Presburg.—The Castle.—State of Public Affairs at Vienna.

VIENNA, *May* 16th, 1778.

IT is full seventy miles north from Buda to the mines of Schemnitz, through a wild, mountainous, and in many parts an almost uninhabited country. The peasants, male and female, partake of the rudeness of the soil, and appear to be in a state of penury, or rather of misery. Few of the women had any covering below the knee, except boots; while the men were wrapt in black sheep skins, with the wool outward. Even the postillions who drove us, had no other covering; and their long moustachios, added to their fur bonnets, gave them the appearance of Tartars, more than of Europeans. The town of Schemnitz, where I passed three days, in order to visit the mines, stands in a

valley

valley ſurrounded on all ſides by lofty hills; and may be ſaid to impend over a hollow abyſs, the ground on which it is built, being every where excavated or undermined. Even in the midſt of the principal market place, there are ſhafts or openings, by which one may immediately deſcend many hundred fathoms into the earth.

Having put on a miner's dreſs and bonnet, preparations which are indiſpenſable, on account of the water that every where oozes, or drips through the fiſſures of the mines; I entered them, not as I had done in Sweden, where I was let down in a bucket, but by means of ladders that conduct from one ſubterranean gallery to another, through paſſages ſo narrow as ſcarcely to admit a ſingle perſon at a time. Four little boys attended, holding lamps. In proportion as we deſcended lower into the earth, the heart perceptibly increaſed, 'till it became, in ſome places, almoſt too cloſe or ſuffocating for reſpiration. Though it was ſcarcely eight o'clock in the morning when we entered the mine

mine, we did not arrive before eleven, at "the gallery of the Emperor Francis;" ſo called from its having been conſtructed under that Prince's reign. Here I found myſelf full fifteen hundred feet under the opening of the higheſt ſhaft. This ſtupendous catacomb or gallery, which extends in length near ſixty thouſand feet, or more than ſeven Engliſh miles, has coſt the ſtate immenſe ſums to make, as well as to repair and maintain; the incumbent earth being every where ſupported by beams of wood, frequently placed double and triple. Some hundred thouſand florins are annually expended for the purpoſe. Below the Emperor Francis's gallery, there are two other ſtories, the deepeſt of which is three hundred feet beneath; but, as they contained no particular object of curioſity, we declined viſiting them. In no part does the interior of the mine open into caverns or chambers of conſiderable ſize; the largeſt which I ſaw, being ſcarcely capable of containing forty perſons: a point of compariſon in which they are very inferior

as objects of grandeur or admiration, to the mines of Danmora in Sweden.

Though gold, silver, copper, and lead, are all found in the mines of Schemnitz, the last mentioned forms in point of quantity, the predominant metal. Their original discovery is almost lost in the barbarism and obscurity of the middle ages; but, it is indisputable that they have been worked for eleven hundred years. At this time they find employment for near twenty-six thousand men, women, and children, in the different departments or processes. An admirable police is maintained; no criminal or malefactor being ever sent there, and no female permitted even to enter the mines. Unlike those of Dalecarlia, Carniola, and many others in various parts of Europe, which are a sort of subterranean colonies, the workmen at Schemnitz never sleep below. After six, eight, or twelve hours of labour, they remount, and are relieved by others. The Turks, who were so long sovereigns and masters of the far greater part of Hungary,

never

never took poſſeſſion of Schemnitz, though they penetrated to a village only two miles diſtant. Content with exacting an annual tribute of ſome thouſand florins, they indolently abandoned the produce of the mines to the Auſtrian Princes.

Nothing can be ſo precarious, fluctuating, and incapable of calculation, as the annual profits derived from them to the Crown; becauſe, at moments when the veins of ore are moſt abundant, they ſuddenly diſappear, and frequently deceive or diſappoint the expectation of the moſt experienced miners. About twenty-three years ago, juſt before the commencement of the great war of 1756, they yielded ſo little, that it became a queſtion, when all the expences attending them were defrayed, whether the Empreſs Queen was a gainer or a loſer. But, preciſely at that time, when ſhe ſtood moſt in need of pecuniary aid, the workmen diſcovered veins ſo rich and productive, that during ſome years the gains were prodigious, amounting annually to ſeveral millions of florins. They have ſince

ſince been gradually diminiſhing, though by no means to ſo reduced a degree as they were in 1756. At preſent they continue to be highly profitable; and beſides employing ſuch numbers of people, bring in a conſiderable revenue to Maria Thereſa. The Baron de Seeberg, a Tranſylvanian gentleman, who is one of the Intendants, accompanied us through the mines, and furniſhed me with the moſt ſatisfactory information reſpecting them.

Directing my courſe to Cremnitz, which is near twenty miles north, and at no very conſiderable diſtance from the foot of the Carpathian mountains, that divide Hungary and Poland, I arrived there in a few hours. The mines of Cremnitz produce only gold and ſilver excluſively; neither iron, lead, nor copper, being found in them. They fall far ſhort of Schemnitz in magnitude, as well as in value and importance; only about eighteen hundred perſons being conſtantly occupied in the various departments; and of ſeven mines which are worked at this time, two

alone produce any confiderable profit. I was let down into the mine of St. Matthias, one of the deepeft, fituate about a mile from the town. Having been placed on a fort of leathern feat, faftened to an iron chain, in twelve minutes I found myfelf at the bottom; during which time I had defcended eight hundred and feventy-five Englifh feet. I was afterwards drawn up in the fame manner. The fenfation is rather pleafing than difagreeable, as the confcioufnefs of being thus fufpended over a dark abyfs, is accompanied with a conviction of the abfence of all real danger. I traverfed a confiderable part of the mine, fometimes walking, at others crawling on my hands and knees, or defcending from gallery to gallery, by means of ladders. The heat was more oppreffive than at Schemnitz; but the paffages were dry, whereas in the former, water oozed or poured down in almoft every part of the mine. Here I had an opportunity of feeing the two fpecies of gold ore, the pale and the red, which lay

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ſcattered in heaps. The produce is however, if poſſible, ſtill more precarious than at Schemnitz. Two years ago, after every expence defrayed, they yielded about eighteen thouſand pounds ſterling; laſt year, only ſeven thouſand entered the Imperial treaſury, free of deductions. No certain calculations can be made on that head.

It is near a hundred and twenty miles from Cremnitz to Preſburg, through a very beautiful and romantic, as well as populous part of Hungary. Inferior to Buda in population and extent, Preſburg is more compact, and the buildings are more modern. On a very ſteep hill, at the extremity of the city, overhanging the Danube, is built the Caſtle, which forms the ordinary reſidence of the Duke of Saxe Teſchen, and the Archducheſs Chriſtina, Governors of the kingdom. The apartments command an extenſive view over the vaſt plains of Hungary and Auſtria: even Vienna may be deſcried, at the diſtance of near five and twenty miles. Below flows the river, divided into ſeveral

channels, and enclosing a number of small islands, covered with wood.

In one of the turrets of the Castle, are preserved the Crown and royal ornaments. So jealous are the Hungarians of their preservation, that they cannot be shewn to any person, unless upon producing a written order from the Empress Queen herself. Even then, a deputation of the nobility and clergy must attend, for the express purpose. No European nation has manifested a more tenacious and inflexible spirit of independence, than the Hungarian. None has made more desperate, though often ineffectual efforts, to emancipate themselves from oppression, or to maintain their political freedom. This remark must nevertheless be understood of the nobility only; for the people at large are equally strangers to the theory, and to the practical benefits of liberty. It is by a judicious concession, not only to the rights of the nobles, but to their prejudices and national customs, that Maria Theresa, during more than seven and thirty years, has maintained

tained her influence over them undiminiſhed. In the Hungarian loyalty, when driven from Vienna at the commencement of her reign, ſhe found the ſureſt and beſt ſupport of her tottering crowns. I could not ſurvey the great hall of the Caſtle of Preſburg, without recollecting that it was the ſcene where the Nobles unanimouſly drew their ſabres, exclaiming, "Our lives and our blood for your "Majeſty!" Neither ancient nor modern Hiſtory preſents any event more affecting, or productive of more important conſequences.

In my way to Vienna, about three leagues from Preſburg, I viewed the remains of the Roman colony or ſtation of Carnuntum, conſtructed by them on the ſouthern bank of the Danube, in order to repreſs the inroads of the Quadi and Marcomanni. Mounds of earth, and one very decayed gateway of Roman workmanſhip, mark the ſpot. I paſſed over the ground upon which ſtood the camp of Cara Muſtapha in 1683, when he beſieged Vienna. It covered more than

two leagues in extent, and tradition points out the preciſe place where the Vizier's tent was erected. His ignorance, temerity, and avarice, ſaved the Auſtrian capital, by allowing John Sobieſki time to come to its relief, after it had been abandoned by the Emperor Leopold.

I find the political aſpect of affairs no way materially changed ſince my departure from this city; and war ſtill impends, though it is not actually begun. The great Auſtrian army is aſſembled in Bohemia; and the Emperor, who remains at Prague, is occupied in accelerating its motions. Frederic is in Sileſia, at the head of his forces, accompanied by his two nephews, the Prince Royal, and the Hereditary Prince of Brunſwic. The Elector Palatine continues to preſerve a pacific and inglorious neutrality, while Saxony is armed and zealous in the Pruſſian cauſe. It is pretended that negotiations are again opened between Joſeph and the King, for adjuſting the points in conteſt. But, if ſuch be the fact, we are here in total ignorance of their nature,

progreſs,

progreſs, or probable reſult. The Empreſs Queen is already gone to the palace of Schonbrun, where ſhe may indulge her emotions in ſolitude, undiſturbed. Vienna itſelf has loſt much of its gaiety, from the abſence of ſo many officers employed on military ſervice. In a few days I ſhall probably ſet out for Poland; all means of paſſing through Bohemia being ſuſpended by the circumſtances of the preſent criſis.

LETTER XVII.

Journey through Moravia to Cracow.—Aſpect of that City.—Palaces.—Ruinous Condition of Cracow.—Poliſh Dreſs.—Marriage Feſtivities.—State of Poland in 1778.—Enterprize of Choiſy, and his Defence of the Caſtle of Cracow.—Salt Mines of Vielicza.

CRACOW, *June* 3d, 1778.

AFTER a ſtay of near ſix months at Vienna, I left it on the 24th of May, and reached Olmutz the following evening. That city, the capital of Moravia, preſented an intereſting and animated ſcene, full of troops, and prepared againſt attack. Every precaution has been taken for its ſecurity, in caſe of a ſiege. All the convents are converted into magazines or barracks; the univerſity is removed to Brinn, and the ordinary garriſon is conſiderably augmented. I walked round the place without the walls, as it is not permitted to mount the ramparts; and I am not ſurprized at the long reſiſt-

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ance which it made, or at the final repulſe that Frederic experienced before it, when he beſieged Olmutz in 1758, juſt twenty years ago. The river Morau, together with ſeveral other ſtreams that unite near the walls, form ſo continued a moraſs round the town, as to render all regular advances difficult, ſlow, and hazardous. Prince Albert of Saxony and Marſhal Haddick, who have under their command a numerous army, will probably protect Olmutz againſt any ſimilar attempt during the preſent ſummer.

Continuing my journey through Auſtrian Sileſia, I arrived at Teſchen, a miſerable town; from whence I had only eight leagues to Billitz, which, previous to the late partition of Poland, formed the limit of the Empreſs Queen's dominions. The country, rich, fertile, and populous, formed a ſtriking contraſt to the towns, in which every ſpecies of poverty and wretchedneſs ſeemed to reſide. I croſſed, beyond Teſchen, the river Viſtula, there a ſhallow torrent, ſcarcely twelve miles from its ſource in the Carpathian

thian mountains; and after being detained for ſeveral hours at Billitz, I entered the Imperial Poland. Before the partition of 1772, the Palatinate of Cracow extended to the frontier of Auſtrian Sileſia; but, ſince that memorable event, Maria Thereſa's dominions are puſhed to the edge of the Viſtula, and to the ſuburbs of Cracow itſelf. I had flattered myſelf with reaching that city, the evening of the ſame day on which I left Billitz, the diſtance between the two places being only ſixty-ſix miles: but, about two leagues from Cracow, the horſes having tired, we were obliged to paſs the night in a wood. A peaſant, after ſome hours, relieved us from our embarraſſment, and I arrived early next morning, the 30th of May, on the ſouthern bank of the Viſtula, oppoſite to Cracow. Croſſing the river over a looſe floating raft, as it might more properly be termed than a bridge; after a fatiguing journey from Olmutz, I gladly found myſelf in a tolerable houſe, kept by a Frenchman, on the great ſquare of the

the ancient capital of this dismembered kingdom.

Cracow cannot be visited by a stranger, without exciting at every step, emotions of mingled compassion and indignation: pity, on contemplating the fallen state of a city once flourishing, populous, and celebrated; now ruinous and deserted: indignation, when we reflect on the abject state to which a country is reduced, where public spirit is extinct, the Crown degraded, the Nobility enslaved, or driven to wander in exile, and its fairest provinces divided among foreign Powers. On entering Cracow, every object presented the image of desolation Houses, uninhabited and tumbling into ruin, as if recently sacked or abandoned by an enemy, struck me on all sides. Even in the most frequented streets, many of the finest buildings are falling to decay. The Castle, which once constituted the royal residence of the Polish Kings, built on an eminence at the southern extremity of the city, partakes of the general destruction.

ſtruction. In the apartments, which now begin to admit the inclemencies of the weather, are ſtill to be ſeen the devices and cyphers of the Sovereigns of the family of "Vaſa," who governed Poland for more than eighty years, during the laſt and the preceding century. The walls, as well as rooms, bear melancholy teſtimony to the actual calamities of the country. They are full of the marks of ſhot and cannon balls, diſcharged againſt the Caſtle, when Cracow was beſieged by the Ruſſians, only ten years ago. General Apraxin, after a deſperate reſiſtance, entered it by ſtorm in Auguſt 1768, putting to the ſword all who oppoſed him. From the hill on which it ſtands, the view is beautiful, commanding the city, the courſe of the Viſtula, and the country to a great diſtance, bounded towards Hungary by the Carpathian mountains, whoſe ſummits are white with ſnow, or loſt in the clouds.

Within the walls of the Caſtle, cloſe to that part of it which may be denominated

the Palace, ſtands the cathedral, where repoſe the bodies of the various Kings of Poland, from Sigiſmund the Firſt, of the line of Jagellon, in the ſixteenth century, down to Auguſtus the Second of Saxony incluſively, who died in 1733. John Sobieſki is among the number; but, to my aſtoniſhment, he has no monument erected to his memory. About a mile out of Cracow, to the north, is likewiſe, another palace, which, though now in a ſtate of total dilapidation, bears the marks of former ſplendor. In the gardens, which are converted to purpoſes of huſbandry, and covered with grain, a Tumulus, thrown up more than four hundred years ago, by Caſimir the Great, King of Poland, attracted my attention. It is deſigned to commemorate the ſpot where his miſtreſs is buried. She was a Jeweſs, named Eſther; and ſuch were her perſonal charms, as well as her aſcendant over the King, that to theſe circumſtances her countrymen are ſaid to have been eminently indebted for the immunities civil and political, which Caſimir beſtowed

beſtowed on them, and which to this day they enjoy in Poland.

The effects of national barbariſm, no leſs than of political humiliation, perpetually impreſs the mind, on ſurveying the aſpect of the city from which I am writing. Till within the laſt two years, it was not wholly paved; and nothing can be ſo execrable as the preſent paving, which ſcarcely indeed deſerves the name. There is not a ſingle lamp in the place. No precautions are uſed to cleanſe the ſtreets, which of courſe become infectious in ſummer, and almoſt impaſſable in winter. Spouts projecting from every houſe, inundate the paſſenger whenever it rains. The bridge laid acroſs the Viſtula, is only a collection of planks, floating on the ſtream; over which a waggon ſcarcely ventures to paſs. I viſited the Univerſity yeſterday, which is mean, ruinous, and deſtitute of every thing requiſite for the education or inſtruction of youth. The arſenal is converted into a ſtable; and the population of Cracow

Cracow has diminiſhed in proportion with its grandeur. On numbering the inhabitants a little time ago, they were found to fall ſhort of ten thouſand, among which are included a great proportion of beggars, or perſons in the laſt ſtage of wretchedneſs. The town of Caſimir, which is a ſort of deſerted ſuburb, ſtill more miſerable than the city to which it is joined, may contain likewiſe, it is ſuppoſed, about five thouſand perſons, principally Jews; no individual of that nation being permitted to reſide in Cracow. If we eſtimate the whole number of people at fifteen thouſand, we ſhall rather exceed, than fall ſhort of the truth. Yet, this was the ancient metropolis, and is ſtill accounted the ſecond city of Poland in ſize, population, and extent.

The Poliſh dreſs continues here to be much worn by perſons of every rank, though it inſenſibly and annually becomes leſs univerſal. At Warſaw, I am aſſured that it is in a great meaſure already ſupplanted by the German modes and manners. There

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is ſomething martial, rude, and characteriſtic in the Poliſh habit, which by no means diſpleaſes. It breaks that tame and inſipid uniformity of external appearance, which, in the courſe of the preſent century, has almoſt entirely ſupplanted the ancient national diſtinctions of dreſs throughout Europe. The Portugueze, the Ruſſian, and the Neapolitan of condition, are now no longer diſtinguiſhable from each other; and all the former originality of garb, which diſcriminated one nation from another, is extinct. The Poles alone, who have ſurvived their independence, have nevertheleſs tenaciouſly preſerved their former habit, which hitherto the Ruſſians have not attempted to compel them to renounce. A "Piaſt," or gentleman, thus clothed, preſents a ſtriking contraſt to thoſe of every other country. His head, which he ſhaves, is covered with a large fur bonnet. He wears a ſort of huſſar's dreſs, with long hanging ſleeves, a ſabre that reaches to the ground, and boots. His enormous Mouſ-

tachios

tachios complete the fierce ſingularity of his figure, and remind us of his Sarmatian origin.

I was a witneſs, two days ago, in a cottage not far from this city, to the revelry and feſtivity obſerved on the marriage of two Poliſh peaſants. The bridegroom was a tall, handſome young man; and the intended bride, though not beautiful, might be termed very agreeable in her perſon. She wore a jacket laced with gold, which fitted exactly to her ſhape; and while it modeſtly concealed her neck, betrayed the formation of her figure. Her hair, parted on the crown of her head, was ornamented with a cap, compoſed of gold thread, and a garland of flowers. Behind, her hair, in great quantity, fell down her back, braided with roſe-coloured ribands. When I came into the room, it was filled with peaſants of both ſexes, half intoxicated. The young bride ſupported herſelf againſt the wall, while her lover, quite unreſtrained by the preſence of ſo many ſpectators, paid

his court to her by every teſtimony of drunken and ſavage pleaſure. He leaned againſt her, howling, whiſtling, ſinging, and hallooing by turns in her ear. From time to time, he preſented her glaſſes of beer, which ſhe never refuſed. But, when he attempted to take liberties with her perſon, ſhe affected to oppoſe his careſſes, and to repulſe his freedom. At a little diſtance was ſeated the bride's mother, in a pleaſing ſtate of partial inebriation, regarding attentively the two lovers. Round them were ſeveral young men, who attended on the bridegroom; and ſix Poliſh girls in waiting on the bride. Theſe females were dreſſed exactly like her, having circlets of flowers about their heads, and ſeveral rows of coral round their necks. In the adjoining room, a number of peaſants, male and female, were engaged in dancing. The men wear enormous boots, fortified with iron heels, which they ſtrike continually againſt each other. It formed altogether a moſt entertaining exhibition of barbarous mirth.

Such

Such is the abject and subjected condition of this city, that even its internal protection and police are not entrusted to the Poles. Catharine the Second, who placed Stanislaus on the throne, not only maintains him in it, but extends her maternal care to every part of his remaining dominions. Her troops, to the number of about one hundred and fifty, are quartered in Cracow, and subsisted at the expence of the inhabitants. Nearly as many more, of whom a third part are Cossacks, dispersed in the surrounding villages, awe the country, and maintain the publick tranquillity. On the Southern bank of the Vistula, not a musket-shot distant from the suburbs, where the territories of Maria Theresa now commence, a guard of Austrian soldiery is stationed. For, in consequence of the late partition of Poland, Cracow, which previously stood in the midst of the Palatinate of the same name, is become a frontier place, exposed to hourly insults, whenever circumstances may impel or induce the Empress Queen to cause her forces to advance further into

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the kingdom. It is difficult to conceive a tenure more precarious than the one by which Stanislaus continues to hold the city; and over which, in fact, his supremacy is merely nominal. In the suburb of Casimir, there are stationed, it is true, between one and two hundred Polish troops, who are paid by and in the service of *the Republic*, not of *the Crown* of Poland. But they cannot act, except in obedience to the orders of the Russian Commander, who receives his instructions from Catherine's Embassador at Warsaw, whose pleasure is paramount to all laws, or control of any kind.

During my stay here, I have had opportunities of enquiring every particular, relative to the celebrated enterprize of Charlot and Choisy, who, little more than six years ago, surprized the Castle of Cracow; and afterwards maintained it for several months, against the whole Russian force, stationed in this part of the kingdom. Few attempts of a similar kind have been more hardy, better planned, or more succefsful. The

detail, which is not uninterefting, will convey an idea of the incapacity, as well as pufillanimity, that have diftinguifhed the conduct of the confederate Poles, in all their ill concerted attempts to fhake off the Ruffian yoke, and to emancipate their country. During the inteftine troubles and civil wars, which defolated this unfortunate kingdom for feveral years, fince the election of his prefent Majefty to the Crown; he has owed his protection and prefervation folely to the Mufcovite troops of his powerful ally, Catharine the Second. They entered Cracow, at the Breach, in 1768; and more than fifteen hundred were ftationed here as a regular garrifon, in the commencement of the year 1772. At that time, an army of Poles, confederated under various leaders, in order to oppofe the tyranny of the Court of Peterfburg, having approached the place, encamped fcarcely a league off, higher up on the Viftula. In the camp were many French Officers, who had either been fent to aid the Confederates by the Duke de Choifeul, during the time that he

he was firſt Miniſter of France; or who, deſtitute of occupation in time of peace, had ſought fortune and employment at the extremity of Europe, among the Poles.

Of the number was Monſieur de Choiſy, a man whoſe energy of mind rendered him capable of conceiving, and his intrepidity of executing, the boldeſt deſign. Having been apprized that the Ruſſians, ſtationed in the Caſtle of Cracow, were negligent and careleſs in their guard, he found means to corrupt a Poliſh ſutler, who lived in the fortreſs, and who ſupplied the garriſon with proviſions. Encouraged by a promiſe of reward, this man offered to aſſiſt the Confederates in ſurprizing the Caſtle, and even engaged to become their guide. He acquainted them, that there was only one entrance unguarded, by which they could probably effect their deſign; which was a common-ſewer, or neceſſary, that emptied itſelf acroſs the wall, on the outſide of the hill. Through this channel, it was therefore determined to make the attempt; and on the day agreed, the ſutler facilitated its execution

execution by giving an entertainment, in honor, as he pretended, of the anniverſary of his daughter's birth. The Ruſſian Lieutenant who commanded in the fortreſs, was invited to the banquet; and after ſome hours of convivial feſtivity, was carried off from table, in a ſtate of intoxication. The number of ſoldiers ſtationed within the Caſtle, did not exceed fifty, many of whom were in the ſame condition with their Commander.

Meanwhile the confederate army having approached the city, on the ſecond of February 1772; Choiſy, at the head of about three hundred followers, favoured by the night, advanced along the bank of the Viſtula, unperceived, quite under the Caſtle-walls. In Choiſy's little band, was a young man, called Charlot, a native of France, who having been reduced, on account of his irregularities, to the neceſſity of quitting his country, had joined the Poliſh inſurgents. He was ſelected to conduct the party deſtined for the enterprize; a com-

miſſion which he undertook with alacrity. Accompanied by about thirty volunteers, chiefly French or Germans, he mounted the hill, which is exceedingly ſteep at that place; having previouſly taken the precaution of turning their coats inſide out. The hole is ſtill appropriated to the ſame uſe of a common-ſewer, and has undergone no alteration, except that over it is now laid a grating of iron. But, inſtructed by experience, a Ruſſian ſentinel conſtantly mounts guard on the ſpot, to prevent any repetition of the experiment. It is indeed, matter of ſurprize, that ſuch a place ſhould ever have eſcaped obſervation.

Charlot having entered the ſewer firſt, his companions followed ſingly, it not admitting more than one abreaſt. After wading for ſome way, up to their armpits, they ſucceſsfully effected their object; and as every inſtant was precious, they began by diſpatching the ſentinel, poſted at the place where they emerged from the ſewer. The ſutler having joined them, Charlot, with about

about fifteen of his followers, haſtened to the Lieutenant's apartment, which he entered ſword in hand. Waking with the noiſe, the Ruſſian officer inſtantly diſcharged a loaded piſtol at him, the ball of which broke his thigh. He ſtaggered back, and ſupported himſelf againſt the wall, while his companions diſpatched the Lieutenant. They then proceeded to put to the ſword, or to ſecure, the remaining part of the garriſon; while others, without loſing a moment, opened a little poſtern gate, at which Choiſy entered, with his troop of two hundred and ſeventy.

Being now completely maſters of the Caſtle, Choiſy left a ſmall number of men to guard it, and ſallied out into the city, at the head of the remainder. So admirably had the enterprize been executed, and with ſo little noiſe or diſturbance was it attended, that the Ruſſian forces quartered in Cracow, were perfectly unapprehenſive of danger, as well as unprepared for reſiſtance. According to the plan concerted between

between Choiſy and the Chiefs of the confederate Poles, it was ſettled, that as ſoon as he had got entire poſſeſſion of the fortreſs, he ſhould without delay attack the Muſcovite ſoldiery poſted in the town. On their part, the Confederates engaged to make themſelves maſters of two gates, than which nothing could be more eaſy; and to fall upon the enemy in the rear, who would thus have been encloſed between two fires.

Choiſy fulfilled his part of the agreement with equal punctuality and ſucceſs. He even advanced with ſo much ſilence and ſecrecy, through the ſtreets of Cracow, that he got within fifty paces of the grand guard, before he was either perceived or diſcovered. The Ruſſians then beat to arms, and repulſed his little troop. Under theſe circumſtances, totally unſupported, he nevertheleſs ſuſtained the action for more than two hours, continually retreating, in momentary expectation of being ſuccoured by the confederate forces; but, none appeared. On the contrary, with unparalleled incapa-

incapacity or pusillanimity, they retired without making any effort, and abandoned him to his fate. Thus deserted, and overpowered by numbers, Choisy fell back, regained the Castle, and shut the gates on the enemy. Though destitute of all assistance, he defended himself with no less bravery than skill. It became necessary to march troops from Warsaw, to the aid of those at Cracow, and the united forces did not fall short of four thousand. Near nine hundred Russians perished in the various assaults, given during the course of the siege; and it was not till near five months after the surprize of the Castle, that the besieged, having totally exhausted their ammunition and provisions, were under the necessity of submitting at discretion. They were sent into Siberia, according to the laudable principles of Catharine's policy, in order to deter others from following their example. Choisy himself was not exempted from so rigorous a punishment. Charlot being rendered incapable of walking by reason of his wound,

wound, remained a priſoner in the hands of the Ruſſians. It is with pleaſure I add, that both thoſe gallant, but unfortunate gentlemen, together with ſome others of the French taken in the Caſtle of Cracow, have ſince been permitted to return to their native country.

Thus terminated an attempt, which, had it been properly ſuſtained by the confederate Poles, might have had great and important political conſequences: perhaps, might have at leaſt delayed, if it had not averted, the partition of the kingdom, that took place immediately afterwards. But, the Poles, though enthuſiaſtic in their efforts to maintain, or to recover the independence of their country, have always been deficient in judgment, deſultory in their conduct, and precipitate in their projects. To theſe characteriſtic national defects, may in great meaſure be attributed their deſtruction. Before I quit the ſubject of Cracow, I ſhall ſubjoin the fate of the ſutler who introduced Charlot into the Caſtle, which is not the leaſt

least tragical or interesting part of the narration. No sooner had Choisy got possession of the fortress, than his first care was to send this man away, after rewarding him with a present of one hundred ducats, and enjoining him, as he valued his life, instantly to leave Poland. The sutler obeyed, and in a few hours reached Billitz, the first town in Austrian Silesia, where he might have remained in perfect safety. His wife and two children were preparing to follow him. But, after some stay at Billitz, he had the imprudence to return to Cracow in disguise, having persuaded himself that the Russians would not discover him. Being soon recognized, he was condemned to the punishment of the "Batogs;" a mode of execution common in Muscovy, which is inflicted by flogging or striking the criminal on the back with a thong, in which is contained a piece of lead. Under this sentence he expired, the victim of his own folly and temerity, on the very spot where Charlot had been admitted into the Castle.

I returned yefterday from vifiting the falt mines of Vielicza, fituate two leagues off, in the Imperial Poland, on the fouthern fide of the Viftula. After being let down by a rope, as in thofe of Cremnitz, to the depth of about two hundred and thirty feet; our conductors led us through galleries, which, for loftinefs and breadth, feemed rather to refemble the avenues conducting to fome fubterranean Palace, than paffages cut in a mine. They were perfectly dry in every part, and terminated in two chapels compofed entirely of falt, hewn out of the folid mafs. The images which adorn the altars, as well as the pillars and ornaments, were all formed of the fame tranfparent materials; the points and fpars of which, reflecting the rays of light from the lamps which the guides held in their hands, produced an effect equally novel and beautiful. Defcending lower into the earth by means of ladders, I found myfelf in an immenfe hall or cavern of falt, many hundred feet in height, length, and dimenfions, the floor and fides of which were cut with exact regularity.

regularity. A thoufand perfons might dine in it without inconvenience, and the eye in vain attempted to trace, or to define its limits. Nothing could be more fublime than this vaft fubterranean apartment, illuminated by flambeaux, which faintly difcover its prodigious magnitude, and leave the imagination at liberty to enlarge its bounds indefinitely. After remaining about two hours and a half under ground, I was drawn up again in three minutes, with the greateft facility.

The mines of Vielicza, if confidered as objects of curiofity, afforded me higher gratification than any, which I have vifited in Europe. They have been already worked above five hundred years, and appear to be inexhauftible; more falt being found in them than can poffibly be fold, though they fupply all Poland with their produce. It is fcarcely mixed with any extraneous, metallic, or earthy particles, in the places where the workmen principally dig. They have in fact little more trouble than merely

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to collect, bruize, or pulverize, and put it into barrels. Only four hundred and thirty-five men are employed at this time; but in winter they amount to double the number. At Vielicza, as in Hungary, the miners never ſleep below; the horſes alone, about fifty of which are uſually in employment, remaining conſtantly under ground. No woman is allowed to deſcend into the mines; a regulation of great propriety. All the Intendants and Overſeers are Germans: the miners are univerſally natives of Poland. They enter at four o'clock in the morning, and continue below till the ſame hour in the afternoon, when they are drawn up and relieved by others. In depth, the mines of Vielicza fall far ſhort of thoſe at Schemnitz, being no where above twelve hundred feet below the ſurface of the earth. But, they are in every reſpect far eaſier of acceſs; and the air, which I found ſo oppreſſive in the Hungarian, was cool and pleaſant in the Poliſh mines.

Their

Their loſs to the Republic is beyond all eſtimation, and as they conſtituted a chief ſource of the royal revenues, having always been part of the domain of the Crown, the preſent King muſt doubly feel the defalcation of ſuch a ſource of national wealth. Maria Thereſa and her ſon ſeem to be fully aware of the value, as well as importance of the acquiſition. Vielicza fell to the ſhare of Auſtria, in the memorable partition of this country, ſix years ago. Every precaution is now taking, in order to ſecure it; not againſt the Confederates; for thoſe miſerable combinations are completely quelled, and Poland, from one extremity to the other, is ſubjugated under the Ruſſian deſpotiſm: but the Court of Vienna juſtly dreads a more formidable enemy. Cracow and Vielicza are not far removed from the frontiers of Sileſia; and Frederic, whoſe attention is ever active, may eaſily make an irruption from Breſlau or Schweidnitz into Poland. The Viſtula would form no ſufficient barrier againſt his inroads. Batteries are therefore

erecting. "Chevaux de Frise" are already placed, and a body of troops is stationed, for the protection of the mines. Time will shew whether these measures are sufficient for their effectual safety and preservation.

My next letter will be from Warsaw, for which city I shall set out to-morrow.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

Luke Hansard, printer, near Lincoln's-Inn Fields.




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